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June 1923

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

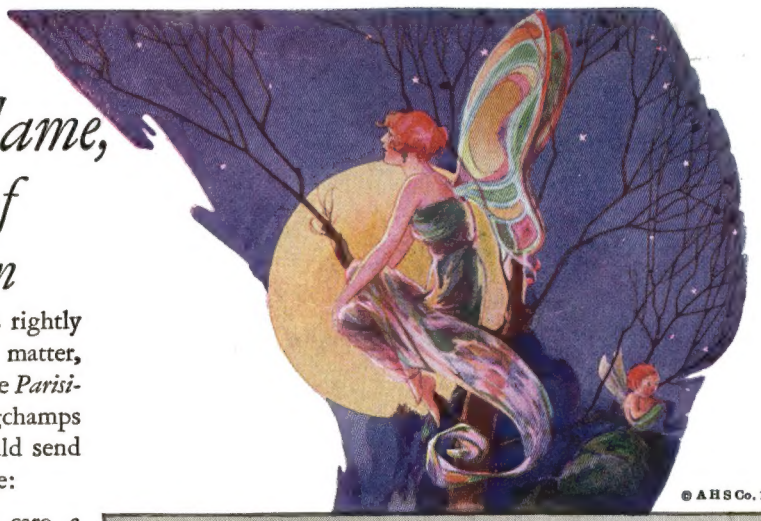
Rupert Hughes

Melville Davisson Post's greatest mystery story

Edgar A. Guest

W. L. George, Gerald Beaumont, George Gibbs, Arthur Somers Roche and others

For you, *Madame,*
—a new secret of charme Parisien



© A H S Co. 1923

Of the *toilette* of *Madame,* Paris has rightly said: "It is only the details which matter, but they must be perfect." And those *Parisiennes* of the type one sees at Longchamps and wherever fashion gathers, would send to the American ladies this message:

"In Paris we select, with what care, a single scent. Each of our *articles de toilette* bears this same French fragrance. The one *odeur* we have made our own, breathes gently through our entire *toilette.*"

Naturally, then, and with so great confidence will the American ladies turn to Djer-Kiss—the *parfum* masterpiece of M. Kerkoff. For does not each of the Djer-Kiss toiletries bear the same *odeur captivante* of *Parfum Djer-Kiss* itself? The Parfum, Toilet Water, Face Powders, Talc, Sachet, Soap and Rouges—all are French, adorably French.

May we ask that *Madame* look over her *table de toilette.* If any of the *Djer-Kiss Spécialités* are missing, do obtain them this very day. Do achieve, through the purchase of the *Djer-Kiss Spécialités,* the secret of this French harmony of the *toilette.*

At the Longchamps races one may mingle with Princes, Dukes and Duchesses—the élite of world society.

Send for M. Kerkoff's new sample paquet

A new *paquet* of Djer-Kiss samples, containing Parfum, Face Powder, Cold Cream and Vanishing Cream, will gladly be mailed in return for merely 15 cents. Address Alfred H. Smith Co. 50 West 34th St., New York City

Djer-Kiss CREAMS! Cold Cream and Vanishing Cream both are fragranced with *Parfum Djer-Kiss* itself. Fairy aids, indeed, to the beauty of *Madame's* complexion. How needful the warm summer through!

Djer-Kiss FACE POWDERS! Fragranced in France, they are, with *Monsieur Kerkoff's* masterpiece—Djer-Kiss. So soft, so pure and so approved of fashion.

Djer-Kiss

Made in France

KERKOFF, PARIS

EXTRACT · FACE POWDERS · TALC
TOILET WATER · VEGETALE · SACHET · ROUGE
LIP ROUGE · FACE CREAMS · SOAP

These spécialités—Rouge, Lip Rouge, Compacts and Creams—blended here with pure Djer-Kiss Parfum imported from France

If you bought only *one* new Victor Record a week

Victrola No. 300
$250
Victrola No. 300, electric, $290
Mahogany, oak or walnut
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"HIS MASTER'S VOICE"

Victrola

REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

Look for these trade-marks. Under the lid. On the label.
Victor Talking Machine Company, Camden, N.J.

"It Was Worth $2,000! —and I Tossed it in the Drawer"

"It was in the fall of 1918 that I first began to realize what I was up against in business. I could see that I wasn't getting anywhere, plugging along at a routine desk, and I had a feeling that I ought to put myself in line for something better.

"About this time I ran across a LaSalle advertisement—it interested me—I figured I'd better answer it.

"I cut out the coupon, but instead of mailing it I tossed it in the drawer. I don't know exactly why, but it was two years before I sent it in and got the facts.

"To make a long story short, I finally enrolled, sent in my papers, finished the training. And already it has boosted my income twenty dollars a week.

"When I think that I might just as well have had that 'raise' two years ago, it makes me sick! Mailing that coupon when I first saw it, instead of tossing it in the drawer, would have saved me $2,000 in cash."

* * *

Fortunate thing for that man that he finally woke up! Some men pay an even costlier price for their delay. Recently a LaSalle member, a man of 49, confessed that he had first considered specialized training eleven years previously. He figured up what his delay had cost him—assuming that he would have held his own with the average LaSalle-trained man—and his loss was $19,000.

Such experiences are not mere fiction—they're the bitterest reality. Thousands of splendid fellows, starting out in life with every promise of success, grow gray while waiting for their ship to come to harbor. At the critical moment they listen to their weaker selves—and go down to defeat.

On the other hand, thousands of men in whom the seeds of success are deeply planted need but to be shown the path to promotion and they are quick to take it. The reward of their initiative is reflected in such statements as the following:

"LaSalle training has taken me from the $65-a-month class to a present earning power of over $7,000 per annum."

"Just received another raise of $600. This makes a total gain of 400% since I started training. Can either you or I ask more?"

"Passed bar examination with second highest honors in a class of seventy-one."

"Three years ago I was occupying a bookkeeper's high stool and drawing $22 a week. Today I am comptroller of a good-size corporation, with a salary to start of $4,500."

"I was Mill Superintendent, with no practical experience in a business way when I started home-study training. Within one year I was promoted to General Superintendent. Within a period of three years LaSalle training has increased my income from $250 a month to $6,000 a year."

"I have your course in Business Management to thank for the position I now hold. When I took up your work I was barely making a living. Today I sit in the manager's chair of one of the largest financial institutions in the United States and Canada. My earnings this year will be in the neighborhood of $10,000, and I have the greatest opportunity that any man could wish for in the way of promotion to bigger things."

"In the last six months I have had an increase of nearly 50% as a result of LaSalle training under the Problem Method—but it is the *foundation which I am building for something better* that gives me the greatest satisfaction."

When one takes into account the foregoing evidence, together with the fact that during only three months' time as many as 1,193 LaSalle members reported definite salary increases as a result of their training *averaging 8⅓ per cent per man*, one begins to appreciate the tremendous money value of initiative—*and decision.*

* * *

You have read from time to time how LaSalle training is conducted—how the member learns by solving actual business problems, right in his own home, under the direction of some of the ablest men in their respective fields in America. You have read how training under the LaSalle Problem Method quickly brings promotion.

The time has now arrived for *your* decision. You can wait one year—two years—eleven years, if you like, and take your loss—a loss, remember, affecting not you alone, but those whose happiness and welfare are most dear to you. Or you can sign and mail the coupon now—and make today your starting point toward bigger things. That little slip of paper just below this text will bring you complete information about the training you are interested in, together with details of our *convenient-payment plan;* also your free copy of that inspiring book, "Ten Years' Promotion in One." Mailing the coupon does not obligate you. Incidentally, the man who *wins* promotion is the man who *acts.*

LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY

The Largest Business Training Institution in the World

Outstanding Facts About LaSalle

Founded in 1908.

Financial resources more than $7,500,000.

Total LaSalle organization exceeds 1600 people—the largest and strongest business training institution in the world.

Numbers among its students and graduates nearly 400,000 business and professional men and women, ranging in age from 20 to 70 years.

Annual enrollment, now about 60,000.

Average age of members, 30 years.

LaSalle texts used in more than 400 resident schools, colleges and universities.

LaSalle-trained men occupying important positions with every large corporation, railroad and business institution in the United States.

LaSalle Placement Bureau serves student and employer without charge. Scores of big organizations look to LaSalle for men to fill high-grade executive positions.

Tuition refunded in accordance with terms of guarantee bond if student is not satisfied with training received upon completion of course.

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LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY Dept. 666-R CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Please send me catalog and full information regarding the course and service I have marked with an X below. Also a copy of your booklet, "Ten Years' Promotion in One," all without obligation to me.

- ☐ **Business Management:** Training for Official, Managerial, Sales and Executive positions.
- ☐ **Modern Salesmanship:** Training for Sales and Advertising Executives, Solicitors, Sales Promotion Managers, Salesmen, Manufacturers' Agents and all those engaged in retail, wholesale or specialty selling.
- ☐ **Higher Accountancy:** Training for positions as Auditor, Comptroller, Certified Public Accountant, Cost Accountant, etc.
- ☐ **Railway Station Management:** Training for Railway Auditors, Comptrollers, Accountants, Clerks, Station Agents, Members of Railway and Public Utilities Commissions, etc.
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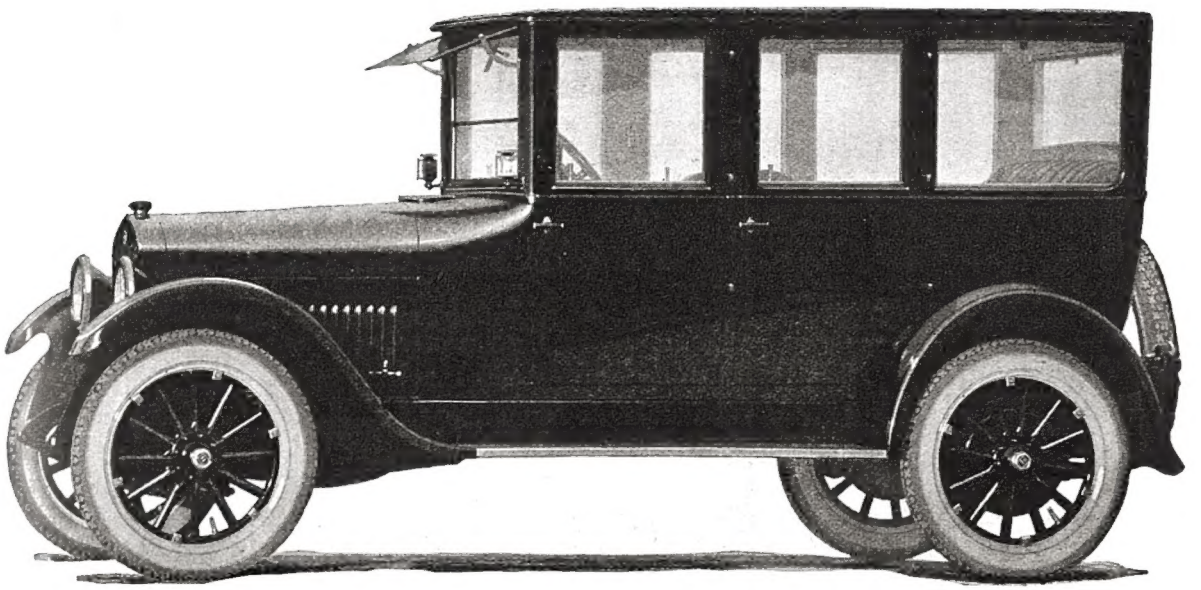
- ☐ **C. P. A. Coaching for Advanced Accountants.**

Name.....*Present Position*.....

Address.....



STUDEBAKER

FOUR-DOOR SEDAN

THE well built car and the poorly constructed car look very much alike on the salesroom floor. Paint and varnish can cover a multitude of weaknesses in closed car construction.

But you can't ride on the paint.

The superior product begins to prove itself on the first day of use and strengthens its proof every day thereafter. At the end of a year the one car is ready to be traded in at a big depreciation. The Studebaker may not even need a fresh coat of paint.

In a Studebaker Sedan the quality is built into the job. The body will not begin to rattle or squeak after thousands of miles of hard usage. It will continue to be comfortable and easy riding and will present a fine appearance month after month as when new.

The mohair velvet plush upholstery will not be worn "shiny," the windows will still fit tightly and operate smoothly and the fittings will still be firmly in place even after thousands of miles of use.

There are closed cars that do not include heaters. Yet, you cannot be comfortable unless you are warm. Every Studebaker Sedan is completely equipped including a heater.

Studebaker's quantity production of cars of quality is responsible for the low price of this Sedan.

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Detroit, Mich. South Bend, Ind. Walkerville, Ont.

Address All Correspondence to South Bend

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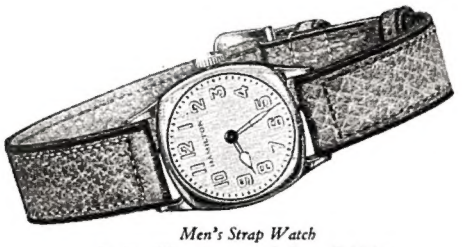
In green or white gold (14k engraved), 23-jewel, five-position adjusted movement. Attractive dial with raised gold numerals.

Women's Wrist Watch
White Gold Filled $48. 14k White Gold $62.

In four different styles—tonneau, round, cushion, or decagon as pictured here. Silk ribbon models in engraved cases.



Men's Strap Watch
Sterling Silver $50. 14k Green Gold $75.

The accurate Hamilton movement No. 986—in a smartly designed cushion shape case with leather strap and luminous dial.

Beauty—Accuracy

A GRADUATION PRESENT

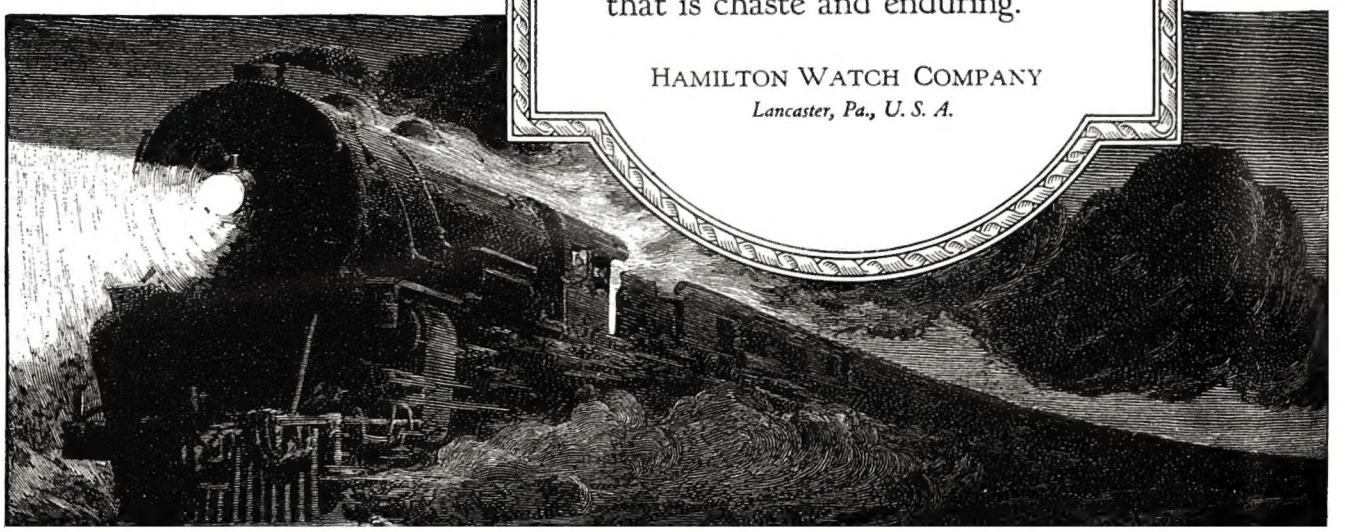
That will be treasured a lifetime

ON Graduation Day let a Hamilton Watch convey the sentiment that you would have live a lifetime.

Among precious objects that you might select, very few can come into such intimate and permanent use.

Intrinsically, any Hamilton Watch is worthy of such a trust. It is a fine watch, noted for accuracy and possessed of beauty that is chaste and enduring.

HAMILTON WATCH COMPANY
Lancaster, Pa., U. S. A.



Hamilton Watch

The Watch of Railroad Accuracy

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On sale the 23rd of each month
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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

JUNE
1923

EDITH WHARTON

America's most distinguished woman novelist, winner of the famous Pulitzer Prize for her novel "The Age of Innocence," begins her latest story in the next —the July—issue. The scene of the story is New York; its odd title is—

"NEW YEAR'S DAY"

and its plot develops for its wonderful heroine a situation absolutely unique in fiction.

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The Private School

By

ANGELO PATRI

Author of "A Schoolmaster in the Great City"; Principal Public School 45, The Bronx

HAVE you ever visited the private school in your town and compared it with the public school? It would be a very interesting experience, for there must be a reason why people are willing to tax themselves twice for the same thing, as do the folk who send their children to private schools.

A good parent looks about for the best school he can find for and give to his child. He knows that the school is going to put its mark on his child for a lifetime and he is deeply concerned as to what kind of mark that will be.

To this end he looks for a good school. There must be plenty of light and air and space, because children need all three if they are to grow. There must be generous provision for play in childhood, for play is the basis of the child's future work. As he plays, so shall he work.

There must be opportunities for creating things like toys and little figures and songs and plays and pictures. There must be an atmosphere of cleanliness and good taste about the place.

The course of study must be broad enough and elastic enough to cover a wide field, so that the child may have many experiences, and so know which is best for him and march boldly along the cleared road to success.

The teachers must be men and women who have been well trained for their positions as guides to children; men and women of big hearts and broad minds and healthy bodies. Their classes must be small, so that no child slips by unnoticed for a single period. The school must have a standard of ethics and a standard of scholarship that the world recognizes as much worth while. To be graduated from such a school is an honor not lightly achieved.

A visit to such a private school will be a rich experience and give you food for thought for many days. How much of this can be brought into the public school? How much of this can we give our children? Why not?

Don't turn up your nose and sniff at the private schools. They are the schools that "know" and, knowing, have done what they could for the fortunate children who came their way. The private schools were founded by people who wanted the best possible education for children when those people discovered that the public was not willing to spend the money for it in the public schools.

That is the great service private schools do. They blaze the way for the others to follow. What is good for the fortunate children of the world is certainly good for those less well placed. If this country is to preserve the idea of democracy, and we mean that it shall, it behooves us all to study the private schools and put the best they have into our own.

What the best parent wants for his children is what every parent wants for his. That is the best possible school in the world, and, let it cost what it may, it is cheap.

(Copyright, 1923, by Angelo Patri)

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE'S SCHOOL SECTION

SUMMER CAMPS AND SCHOOLS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Sargent Camps

For Girls **Peterboro, N. H.**

Promotes a healthy, happy, useful life. Skilled leaders. Unexcelled equipment and care. Water sports, hiking, riding, tennis, dramatics, handicrafts.

Junior Camp, 8 to 15.

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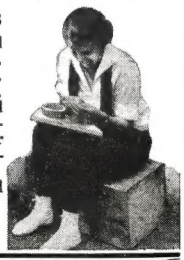
Camp Club. A distinct unit for girls over twenty. All modern improvements. Campers accepted for two weeks or more. June to September inclusive.

For illustrated booklet address **Camp Secretary, 8 Everett St., Cambridge, Mass.**

POTTAWOTTAMIE

A Camp for Girls



On a private island in beautiful Gull Lake, Mich. Swimming, canoeing, sailing, gymnastics, games, nature and folk dancing, basketry, nature study. Girl Scout course. Splendid equipment, expert instructors. Under auspices of Battle Creek Sanitarium. Rates moderate. Address Dean for illustrated announcement.

Kellogg School of Physical Education
Box 433, Battle Creek, Michigan

MONTESSORI

WYCOMBE, PA.

30 miles from Philadelphia. 70 miles from New York. 140 Acres, Cottage Plan.

CHILDREN THREE TO TWELVE YEARS

Scientific Direction has obtained results in conduct, happiness and health of over 700 children enrolled.
Specialists in Charge—Complete equipment for occupations and athletics. Modern sanitation.
Ten Year's Experience an important factor when thoughtful parents are seeking satisfactory results in camp. References exchanged. Reservations limited to 90 children in three distinct groups of 30 each. Rate $200. A. W. FAIST, Directress.
First Montessori Boarding and Day School, Philadelphia, Pa.

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CAMP BRYN AFON **For Girls. Rhinelander, Wisconsin.** 1600 feet above sea level. Screened Sleeping Bungalows with hardwood floors; Saddle horses; Athletic Field; Craft House; All land and water sports; Counsellors College Women. All positions filled. Booklet. LOTTA B. BROADBRIDGE,
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50 Children **50 Acres**

All sports including Bicycling, Ocean and Still Water Bathing. House mother in each cottage. Catalogue.
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For girls (Jr. & Sr.) on Lake Chautauqua, N.Y.
1500 ft. elev. Water sports, horseback riding, dramatics, interpretative dancing, home care. Booklet. REV. & MRS. R. C. STOLL,
25 College Hill, Snyder, N. Y.

Last Call for Camp!

Summer is here again, and with it vacation time. What is your child's summer to be?

You will find one of the well conducted summer camps listed on these pages an ideal solution. Here he will learn to swim—sail a boat—ride a horse—know the trees and the flowers—recognize the call of the birds and best of all, enjoy the companionship of children his own age. Give him the chance to grow strong and sturdy in the crystal clear air of the mountains or the salt tang of the shore. Let him store up health and energy for the school year ahead.

Decide *immediately*. The camp season begins during the last days of June and there are only a few places remaining open for eager campers.

Our comprehensive camp information service is at your disposal without charge. State location desired, whether for boy or girl and any special requirements, enclose a stamped return envelop and address:

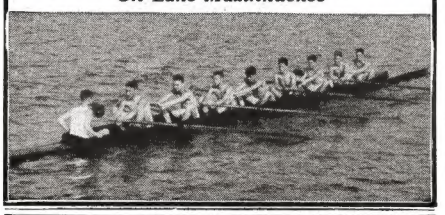
The Camp Department
THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE
33 West 42nd Street New York City

CULVER SUMMER SCHOOLS

Woodcraft for Younger Boys
Naval, Cavalry, Aviation

Culver is for the boy who is up and doing all the time. In the Woodcraft School he gets out into the woods, eating around camp fires, traveling by canoe and trail. The older fellows learn seamanship, sailing naval cutters, or get the fine points of horsemanship on Culver's famous horses. Even flying is taught at Culver. Culver boys live man-fashion life. They must be self-reliant and quick thinking. Every sport and activity a fellow wants in the summer. Write for the catalog of school that interests you most. Address

The Inquiry Dept., Culver, Indiana
On Lake Maxinkuckee



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Intensive 6 weeks' summer course. Starts June 25. Excellent instructors, individual attention. Student dormitory near Lake Michigan. **2635 S. Michigan Ave., Box R, CHICAGO, ILL.**

Phidelah Rice Summer School of the Spoken Word.

East Chop. Martha's Vineyard, Mass. The Bungalow School overlooking the Sea. Courses in expression—voice building, gesture, public speaking, stage art. Land and water sports.
Mr. Phidelah Rice. Massachusetts, Brookline 46, 288 Clark Road.

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Cooperstown, N. Y. On beautiful Otsego Lake

A Parent Writes: "My son . . . tells us very enthusiastic stories of the good treatment and care which he received." All sports. Horseback riding.
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One of the Oldest and Best for Boys, in the Adirondacks. Five distinct sections, ages 8 to 18. All land and water sports; Mountain climbing. Rate includes R. R. fares, laundry and two hours tutoring daily. 30 counsellors, 18th season. Catalog.
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Box R-6, Peekskill Military Academy, Peekskill, N. Y.

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A Catholic Camp for Boys on Lake George, N. Y.

Indorsed by Catholic clergy and laymen. All land and water sports. Radio. Perfect sanitation. Trips to historic points. Resident chaplain. Tuition includes tutoring (if desired) and transportation within 200 miles. Address
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"In the heart of the Pocono Mountains"

CAMP THORNHURST **FOR BOYS**

Horseback riding, Land and water sports, Music, Radio, Nature study, Tutoring. New tents, Screened sleeping porches, Modern conveniences. Boys 6-16. Booklet.
DIRECTORS: Jay Harlee McClellan, M.D.; Mark A. Cassidy
Address: **Camp Thornhurst, Thornhurst, Pa.**

Rocky Pond Camp. In the Adirondacks. A delightful camp for men and women. Children with their parents accepted. Lake, woods, informal life, swimming, canoeing, hiking. Fresh food. Season July 1 to September 3.
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After June 20, Clemons, New York

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For girls. On beautiful mountain lake near Middletown, N. Y. Mountain peaks, waterfalls, chasms, trails. Nature at her loveliest. Land and water sports. Horseback riding. Arts and crafts. Catholic, under auspices of Ursuline Sisters. Booklet.
Address Box R, Middletown, N.Y.

CAMP ROOKWOOD **MONICO, WISCONSIN**
Girls camp on Lake Mowyn

Trails for Horseback riding, unusual equipment—Tennis, Basketball, Baseball, Swimming with rafts and diving. Arts and Crafts. For Booklet address
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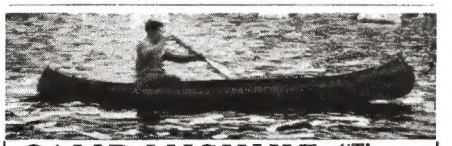

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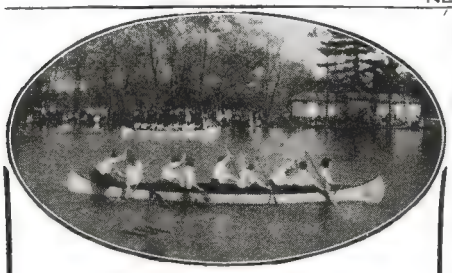
NEW ENGLAND AND MIDDLE ATLANTIC STATES



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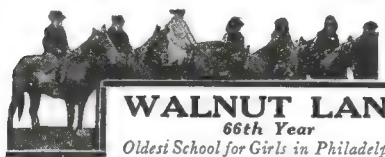

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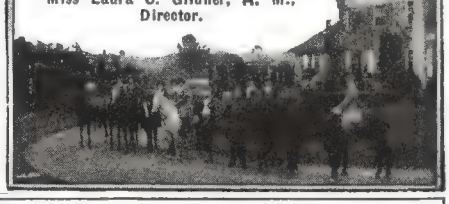

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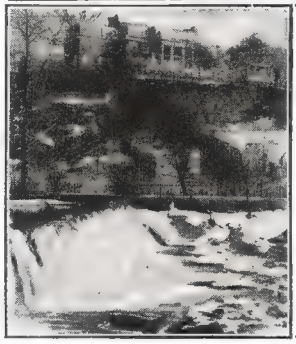

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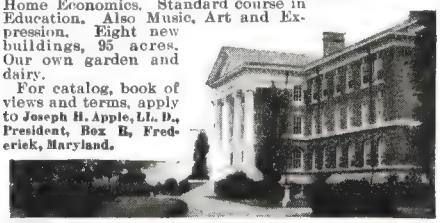

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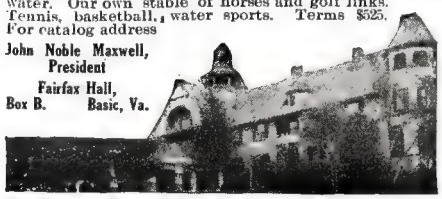

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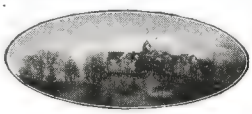

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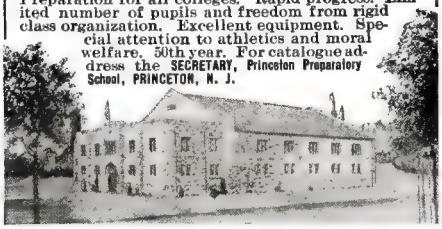

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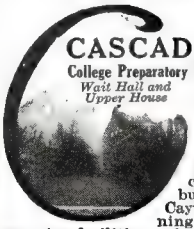

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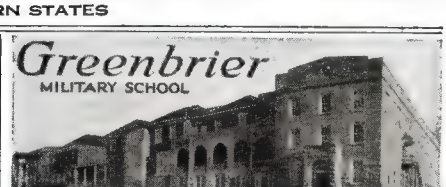

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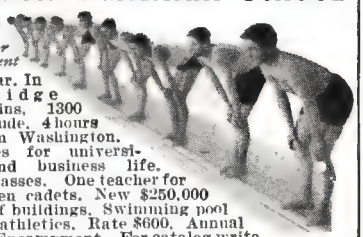

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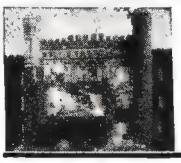

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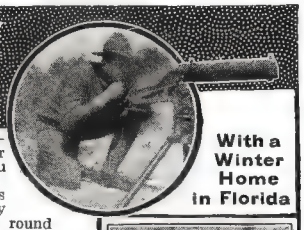

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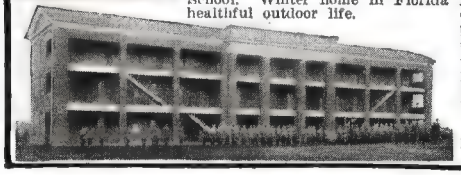

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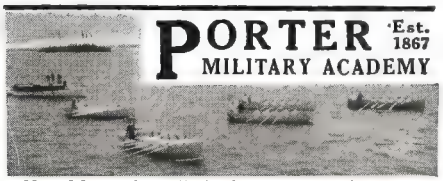

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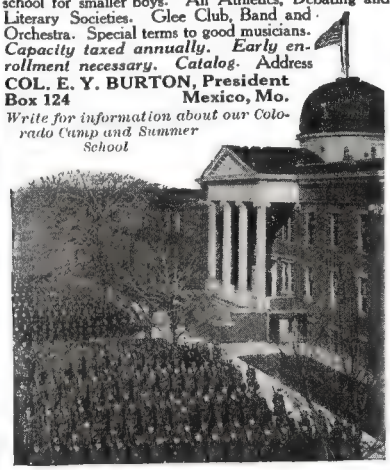

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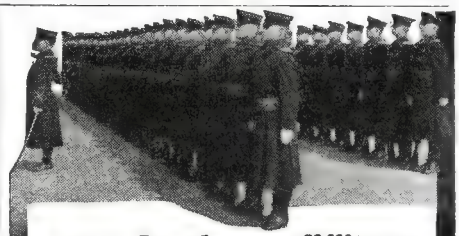

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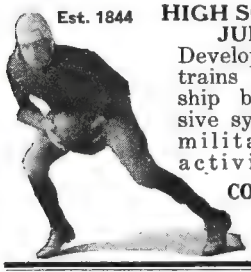

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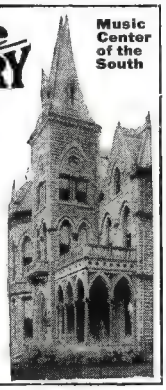

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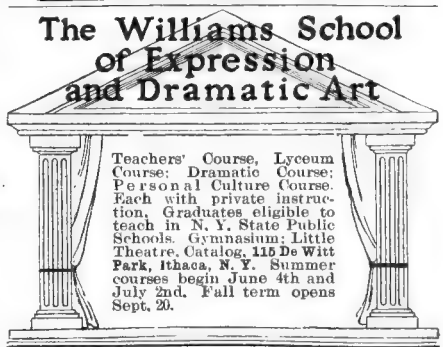

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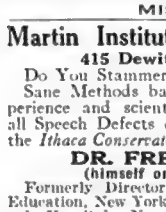

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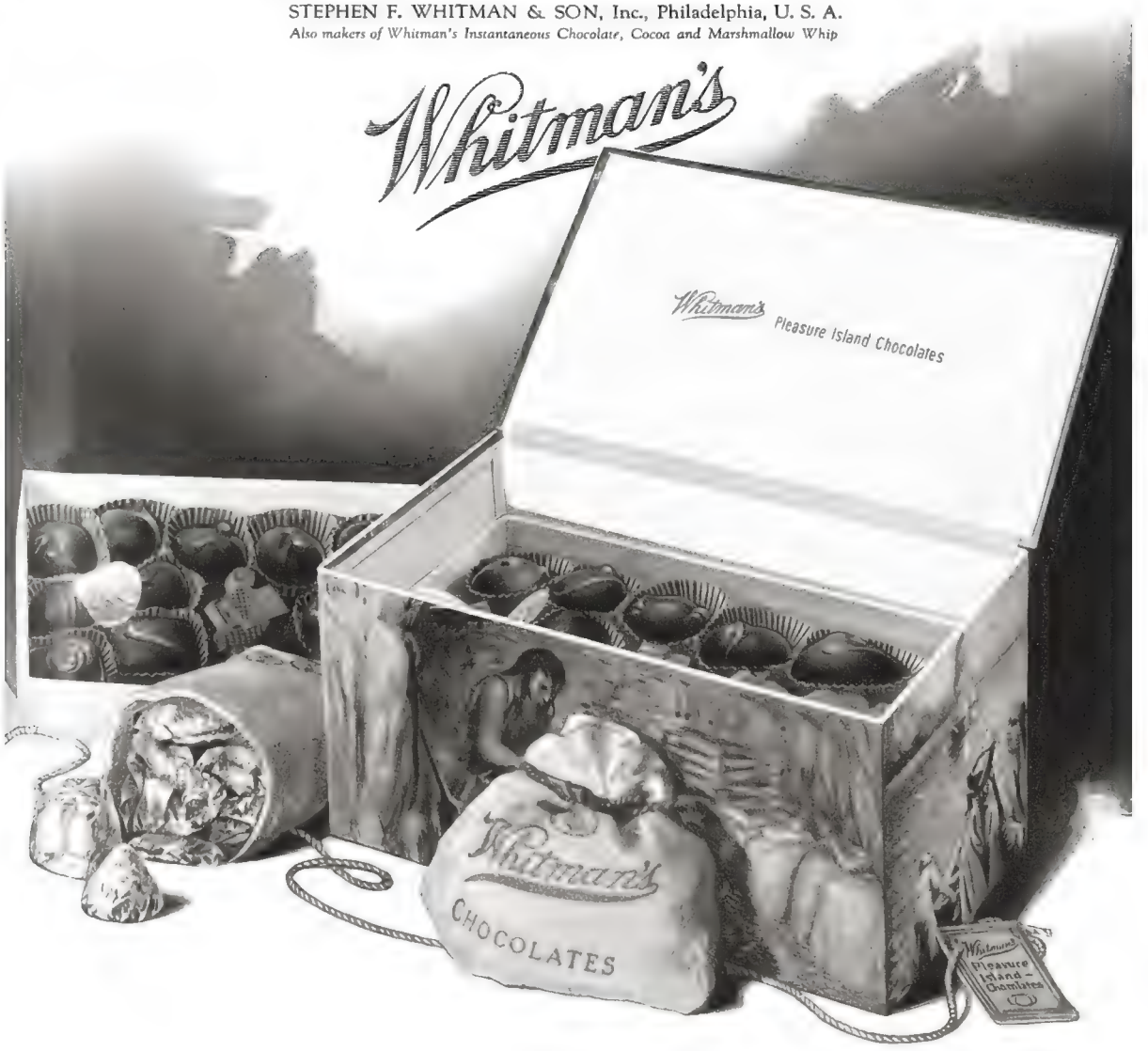

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By ANGELO PATRI

Decoration by ARTHUR E. BECHER

LIFE is sweet in the mouth of experience. Often, bitter though its draught has been, somehow, as we near the bottom of the cup, its bouquet grows richer; we drink with a deeper relish. My neighbor has added a sparkle and tang and sweetness to mine that it could ill spare.

Twenty years ago I built my house on the slope that looked down into his garden. Daily, all those years, my eyes have rested on his quaint brown house poking a rambling gable-end or a dormer window out through the scrambling vines, much as the scraggly nest of a pair of joyous and uncounting robins might, here and there, poke a twig out through the blossoming branches of an old and lichened apple tree.

He came to me the day after we moved into the house and I went into the space that was to be my garden. He lifted one long leg after the other over the low fence that separated us, and I saw as he came toward me that his hands were full of knobby little packages. My heart gave a leap, for I knew they were seeds—seeds for my new garden.

We sat on the shaly old rock that cropped out of the edge of my plot and talked about seeds and gardens and plants and people, and then he went back over the fence, leaving me with that strange, sweet taste in the mouth that only a sampling of the wine of human kindness ever leaves there.

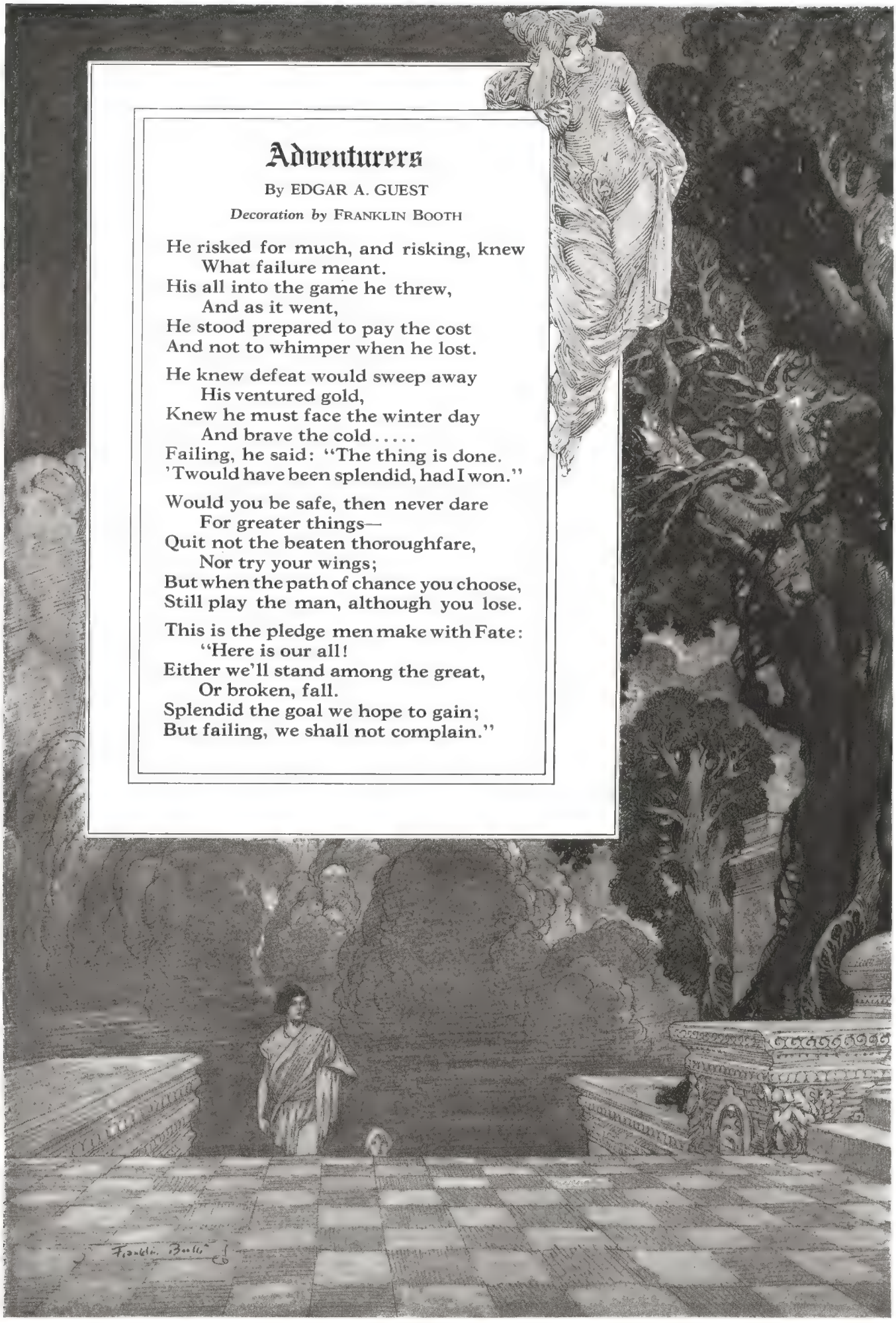
When the larkspurs throve and towered until their blue plumes reached and melted into the blue of the sky, he strode across the ground between us—the fence had been put to better uses long ago—and said: "Those are grand larkspurs, neighbor—just about the finest I've ever seen, and I've raised them now for twenty years."

You see, he did not say, "Those larkspurs *I* gave you," or "*my* seed" or anything like that. Some folk could not have helped saying so, but my neighbor! He was proud and glad of my larkspurs. There's a flavor to such moments as these that make of the years that ripened them but a breath of life's morning.

I watched through one clouded night of terror beside one whose life was bound up in mine. I felt as alone as a shipwrecked soul on a desolate ocean. Suddenly a stealthy light flashed on the farther window. Once, twice. Once, twice. Again and again. I went to the window, and out in the garden stood my neighbor flashing his wee lantern in signal that he was watching and hoping with me. Every hour of that long night the light flashed his message to me, and when in the morning I raced out to tell him that the danger had passed, he nearly shook my hand off and went into the birds'-nest house singing "Sweet Genevieve," his signal of great joy.

Once I had to go away for a long trip. Spring must pass, and summer, and the leaves on the vines of the little brown house fly off on the winds of the winter before I might return; and when at last one evening, very late, I stood again on the old dirt road that led to our homes on the slope, there was the light from the gable-end window streaming out, and there was my neighbor, gray-headed, bowed, in his loose-fitting old gray suit, hastening down the stream of light to tell me supper was ready. Then I knew that all the time I was journeying I had been coming back to my neighbor—to my home.

Ah, life tastes good in the mouth of experience when it is kept sparkling and nippy and sweet by the love of a neighbor who is near you.



Adventurers

By EDGAR A. GUEST

Decoration by FRANKLIN BOOTH

He risked for much, and risking, knew
What failure meant.
His all into the game he threw,
And as it went,
He stood prepared to pay the cost
And not to whimper when he lost.

He knew defeat would sweep away
His ventured gold,
Knew he must face the winter day
And brave the cold.....
Failing, he said: "The thing is done.
'Twould have been splendid, had I won."

Would you be safe, then never dare
For greater things—
Quit not the beaten thoroughfare,
Nor try your wings;
But when the path of chance you choose,
Still play the man, although you lose.

This is the pledge men make with Fate:
"Here is our all!
Either we'll stand among the great,
Or broken, fall.
Splendid the goal we hope to gain;
But failing, we shall not complain."

Palm and olive oils—nothing else—give nature's green color to Palmolive Soap.

She looks as young as ever

How often one hears this said of some woman whom the passing years seem to leave untouched. She rivals her daughters in freshness, and other women marvel.

Keep that schoolgirl complexion—this is the secret, and every woman should share it. Don't let the years write their record on your face when care will prevent it.

Begin today the beautifying that will help renew youth and charm. It will put natural color in your cheeks and make your face look firm and young.

Simple, but effective

This restorative treatment may seem almost too simple, but it is based upon real skin hygiene.

Dirt, oil and perspiration accumulate and must be removed. Otherwise the pores enlarge and blackheads and blotches result.

Wash your face daily with pure soap and you needn't fear complexion troubles. Your skin will remain firm, with a smooth, satiny texture which makes maturity as attractive as early youth.

All soaps won't do this

This mild cleansing is the most effective of all skin treatments, but you mustn't be careless about soap. Facial soap must be mild, soothing while it cleanses. It must be lotion-like, with no harshness. Such a soap is Palmolive, blended from palm and olive oils. They are nature's cleansers, valued since the days of ancient Egypt.

Apply the creamy lather freely, massaging it thoroughly into the skin. Rinse thoroughly and dry gently with a soft towel.

Bedtime is best for cosmetic cleansing, that your skin may be renewed and refreshed while you sleep. In the morning rinse with cold water and then look in the mirror. Your reflection will delight you by its radiant freshness and charm.

Luxury soap for 10c

You are mistaken if you imagine that Palmolive must be a very expensive soap because of its rare costly ingredients.

Palmolive factories work day and night, thus lowering cost. If made in small quantities Palmolive would cost at least 25c a cake. It is yours at 10c.

Use Palmolive on the wash stand and for bathing.

Volume and Efficiency Produce 25c Quality for

10c

Copyright 1923—The Palmolive Company 1752

A Common-sense Editorial
by Bruce Barton

The Middle Years

THE first time I saw him, he stood on the platform facing a great audience of college students. He was thirty-three years old. Stretched across the wall behind him was a big blue banner with this legend:

"The redemption of the world in this generation."

That multitude of ardent young spirits drank in his oratory eagerly. They were impatient with the bungling delays of middle-aged folk who had been conducting human affairs. They wanted no more delays, no fooling; they would get the world saved right away—*now*.

Eighteen years have passed, and if the millennium has come, news of its arrival was not printed in the particular paper which I happen to read.

I saw my friend the orator only a few days ago. He is fifty-one years old, and head resident of a social settlement.

He no longer talks about the redemption of the world in *this* generation. He is reconciled to the fact that human nature is pretty stubborn stuff, requiring a long period for complete purification.

He is content to gather in the handicapped boys and girls of his slum neighborhood and give them a chance to grow strong in his gymnasium. He conducts evening classes where they learn at the close of their day's work. In a quiet way he holds up before them ideals of useful living.

At fifty-one he has dropped the illusions which were so glorious at thirty-three. But the *faith* of thirty-three remains. He still *knows* the battle will be won—though victory be several hundred or thousand years away; and loyally, obscurely, he fights the good fight.

History is a recital of millenniums that failed to materialize.

"The fall of an unpopular minister" (Walpole) "was not succeeded according to general expectation by a millennium of happiness and virtue," wrote Gibbon. "Some courtiers lost their places, some patriots lost their characters—" But otherwise things went on in much the same old way.

That is the record of most elections, of most reform administrations, of most of the wars that were to give us *suddenly* a changed and bettered world.

Youth, which knows no history, comes romping into the world determined upon immediate results. The headwaters of the river of life are fed with pure cold streams of melted snow from the mountain-tops.

The test comes not in youth but in the middle years, when the stream runs slower, when it is a little soiled by hard contact with the banks, when—being often diverted from its course to turn wheels and water farms—it plods more wearily to the sea.

Happy are they who traveling more slowly, yet travel with sturdy hearts; who, having lost the illusions of youth, still have kept the faith.

Risk Precious Silks?
No - if you first consider this safety test

A War-bride's Wedding Dress Washed 115 Times!

In February, 1918, a North Carolina girl was married to a soldier. She wore the charming white embroidered crêpe de chine dress pictured here. Since that day, she assures us that the dress has been washed at least 115 times—probably more—with Ivory Flakes.

"I did it each time myself," says the owner's letter. "I never let it get very badly soiled." It is still beautifully white—eloquent testimony to the mildness and purity of Ivory Flakes.

(Dress and owner's letter on file in the Procter & Gamble offices.)

Experience is a good but often *costly* teacher.

It is not necessary actually to *imperil* a precious silk garment by washing it with a soap whose safety you doubt.

No! Here is a soap-test—simple as adding one plus one, yet equally conclusive. This test will prove a soap's safety without endangering your *most precious* garment for an instant.

Here is the test:

Ask yourself:

"Would I be willing to use the soap on my face?"

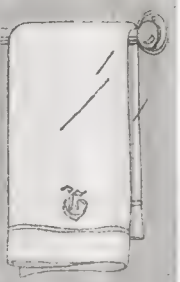
Yes, if it is Ivory Flakes. For Ivory Flakes is Ivory Soap, *flaked* for instant washbowl suds—pure, mild, gentle, white and harmless as pure water itself—the same soap that has befriended women's complexions for 44 years.

Above and beyond other soaps offered for delicate garments, Ivory Flakes has therefore *a real margin of safety*—safety that means life itself to the very most delicate garments you own. Yet Ivory Flakes is economical enough for the heavier things that deserve good care.

It will give us great pleasure to send you a sample of Ivory Flakes and a copy of our booklet, "The Care of Lovely Garments." Please read the offer below.

The full-size package of Ivory Flakes may be had at grocery and department stores.

PROCTER & GAMBLE



IVORY SOAP FLAKES

Makes dainty clothes last longer

FREE—*This package and booklet*

A sample package of Ivory Flakes and the beautifully illustrated booklet, "The Care of Lovely Garments," will be sent to you without charge on application to Section 28-FF, Dept. of Home Economics, The Procter & Gamble Co., Cincinnati, O.

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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

JUNE 1923. VOL. XLI, NUMBER 2 KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN, *Editor*

"His right hand shall be his enemy. And the son of another shall sit in his seat. I will encourage his right hand to destroy him. And I will bring the unborn through the Gate of Life. And they shall lean upon me. And I will enrich them, and guide their feet and strengthen their hearts. And they shall laugh in his gardens, and sit down in his pleasant palaces."

The Blue Image

By

MELVILLE DAVISSON POST

America's most distinguished writer of detective fiction, the author of "Uncle Abner," "The Corrector of Destinies," the "Monsieur Jonquelle" and many other noted stories, here contributes one of the most enthralling mystery novels ever printed by this or any other magazine.

Illustrated by Frederic R. Gruger

The Note:

WE got some great men from England in the old day. They don't permit us to forget it. . . . . Well, we can counter on them. They got Robert Harmscourt, the present Duke of Bradmoor, from us. And he is today, beyond question, the ablest man in the British Empire. They can say that this American family is only the English branch, and cite their court decision giving it the title, should the English line become extinct. But it wont do! The man's an American. And he would have remained an American

"We went over the wall We scaffolded up from the bottom and examined every inch of it. . . . . If

but for the will of a god. No, the expression is correctly written: not the will of God as we are accustomed to say it—the will of a god! Keep the distinction in mind.

And it wasn't Lady Joan! True, she sent for him at once, after old Bradmoor's death, and assembled at her table the three remarkable men concerned with the mystery. But it wasn't Lady Joan that transformed this American into a peer of England. She'd have gone to America with Harmscourt—she'd already promised. . . . . You can't doubt it. It wasn't Lady Joan: *it was the will of a god!*

You can read what Harmscourt says about it. It's the very strangest thing that was ever printed.

The Narrative:

THE very dining-room was extraordinary.

The walls were of bare stone, and the floor had originally been the tamped earthen floor of the cottage. There was a wide, smoked fireplace, and an ancient beamed ceiling.

But the room had been made over by a deft hand.

It was a transformation with a slight expenditure of material; but it was that tremendous transformation which an excellent taste is able to accomplish with even primitive material. The ceiling had been permitted to remain; but the walls had been covered with a blue-gray wash—some dye, I imagine, with a calcimine. An iron grate had been set in the fireplace, and a board floor laid. It was a floor scarcely better than the wood platform of a tent; but one saw little of it, for it was covered with old rugs—ancient, priceless rugs.

There was an immense mahogany table, a long mahogany sideboard against the wall, with silver knobs, their exterior presenting laurel-wreaths inclosing a coat-of-arms carved in relief. The chairs were carved rosewood. There was no cloth on this table; but there was a gorgeous piece of brocade laid right across it, in the center of which was an immense bowl filled with roses. The silver, the glass, every article on the table was exquisite. It was the contrast between these superb furnishings and the crude room that impressed one, as though one should find a jewel mounted in the hull of an acorn.

For a moment the small-talk drifted vaguely by me. I was looking at the empty chair beyond, across the table. It was drawn back, and half-turned away, precisely as the girl had left it when she got up and went out, leaving me to her extraordinary guests, and their strange mission.

Extraordinary is not a word inapplicable to them. I think if one had looked over all England, he could not have selected three men to whom that word would more appropriately apply.

To my right was Henry Marquis, Chief of the Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yard. When one says that long, awkward sentence,—with "Scotland Yard" at the end of it,—one brings up the image of a conventional character in the penny-dreadfuls, or the hatchet-faced detective of Baker Street, with his hypodermic needle; a thin, lemon-colored person, with dreamy eyes, and the like. But—one would not look to see Henry Marquis.

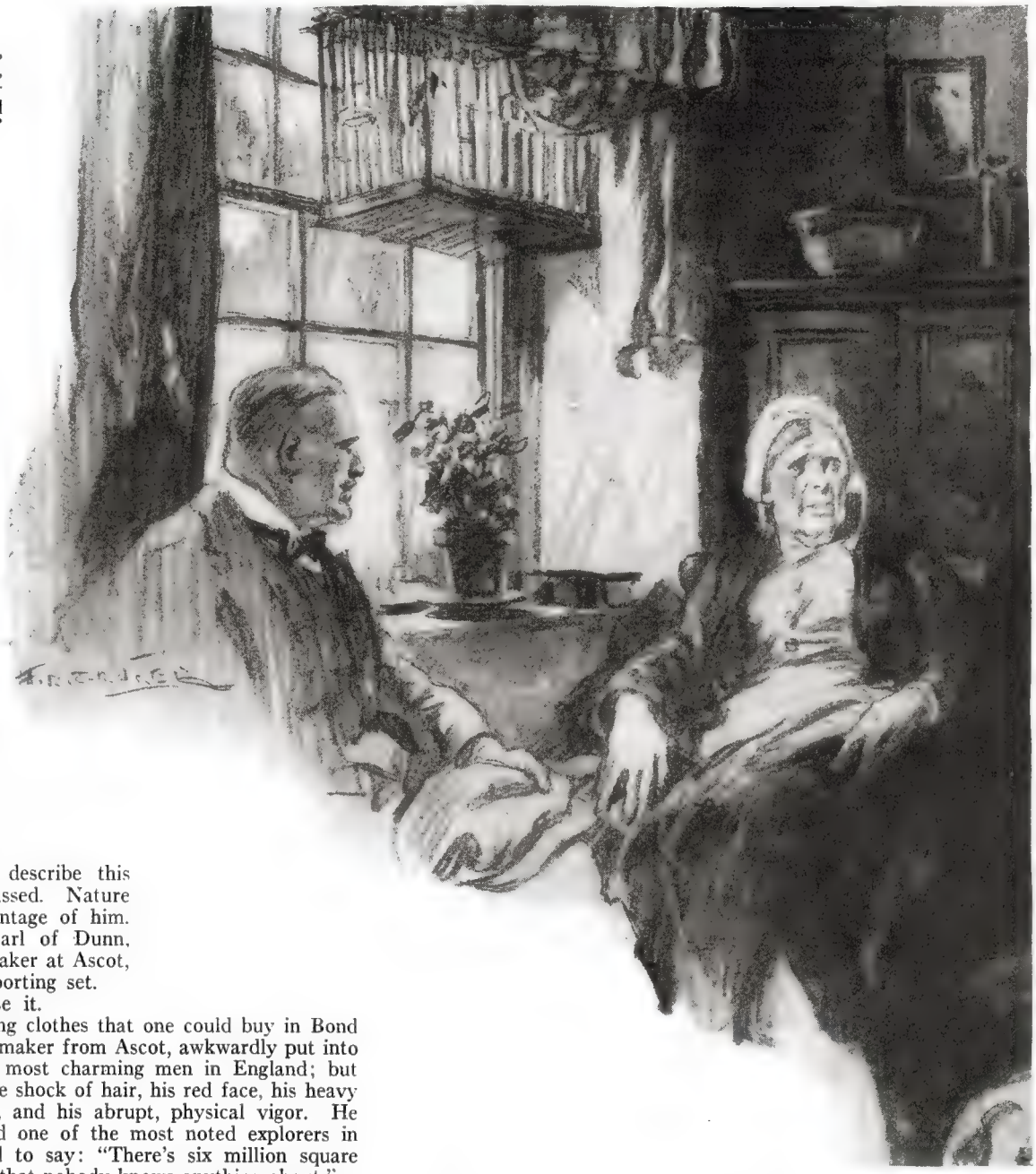
A middle-aged Englishman, with short-cropped gray hair, and the typical figure in the hunting-field. There was nothing peculiar about him except his rather long, pale face, and the strong formation of the jaw. One felt that it would be difficult to prevent this man from carrying out any plan upon which he had once determined. But—one would not associate him with mysteries.

If one had been selecting a character to illustrate a personality concerned with mysteries, he would have selected Sir Godfrey Simon, who was sitting farther along to the right of the chair now empty. He was a big, old man. His head was entirely bald; there was not even a faint suggestion of a fringe of hair around the bald head.

The head was immense.

He had a large, crooked nose; shaggy eyebrows; eyes that

there had been any attempt to scale this wall, we would have found the marks—and we did not find the marks."



"With every interrogation, she became more profuse, more extravagant in her assurance. She had heard the Devil leap into the sea!"

seemed never open,—they were always slits,—narrow, like a cat's eyes; and a big, firm-lipped mouth. He looked like a sphinx. He was the greatest alienist in England. He spoke just then:

"The man was under a curse," he said; "that's what killed him!"

I realized suddenly that the conversation had drifted into the thing that these men had been asked here to explain to me. It had begun, and I had missed a little of it. I moved in the chair, and brought my attention swiftly back from the girl who had gone out.

The third man, seated at my left, had half turned to the fire. He had poured out another glass of whisky. When I try to describe this man, I am always embarrassed. Nature took an unreasonable advantage of him. He was the Thirteenth Earl of Dunn, and he looked like a bookmaker at Ascot, in the paddock with the sporting set.

No clothes could disguise it.

He was in the best evening clothes that one could buy in Bond Street; but he was the bookmaker from Ascot, awkwardly put into them. He was one of the most charming men in England; but there he was, with his coarse shock of hair, his red face, his heavy jaw, his large, harsh voice, and his abrupt, physical vigor. He was a big-game hunter, and one of the most noted explorers in the world. . . . . He used to say: "There's six million square miles of the earth's surface that nobody knows anything about,"—then would come his harsh laugh,—"except me."

He was replying now to the oracular pronouncement of Sir Godfrey Simon.

"A curse, eh! What?" he said. "It was characteristic of you, Simon, to sit perfectly still, like a joss, blink your eyes, and say the man was killed by a curse, when the thing happened. It would have been reasonable if you had meant that the outraged divinity, or hell-factor, or whatever you wish to call it, that old Bradmoor looted, had found a way to turn on him; but that was not what you meant."

Sir Godfrey *did* blink his eyes. They batted an instant. He added another sentence:

"I meant, of course, precisely what I said."

Henry Marquis took the conversation up then. He realized that I did not understand it, that it would have to be presented from the beginning. He touched the polished mahogany table with his fingers, as though they were smoothing out a cloth.

"I think," he said, "that you will get a more accurate understanding of this thing if we give it to you precisely as it impressed us at the time it happened: the facts, and then what we thought about them—what we still think about them. . . . . You will probably have to imagine what Sir Godfrey Simon means, if he means anything."

He laughed, and his firm, capable hand continued to smooth out the invisible cloth on the table. There came a slight, facetious note in his voice.

"I suppose, in fact, it is not essential that an alienist should mean anything. It is the pose that counts in his profession. 'The man was killed by a curse!' Sir Godfrey does not need to mean anything, provided he goes no farther. . . . . It is a fine, creepy explanation, and it precisely suits the average Briton with the Early Victorian novel in his mind. The lord of the manor was always under a curse, when the beautiful milkmaid got into trouble, in those stories. . . . . Is there a family in England that has not a curse on it?"

The big man by the vacant chair spoke again:

"This family has a curse on it."

Lord Dunn turned toward me. He made an abrupt gesture, precisely like a bookmaker sweeping aside a betting offer:

"There you have it," he said. "Set a madman to catch a madman; Simon is in the right profession; old Bradmoor was killed by a curse!"

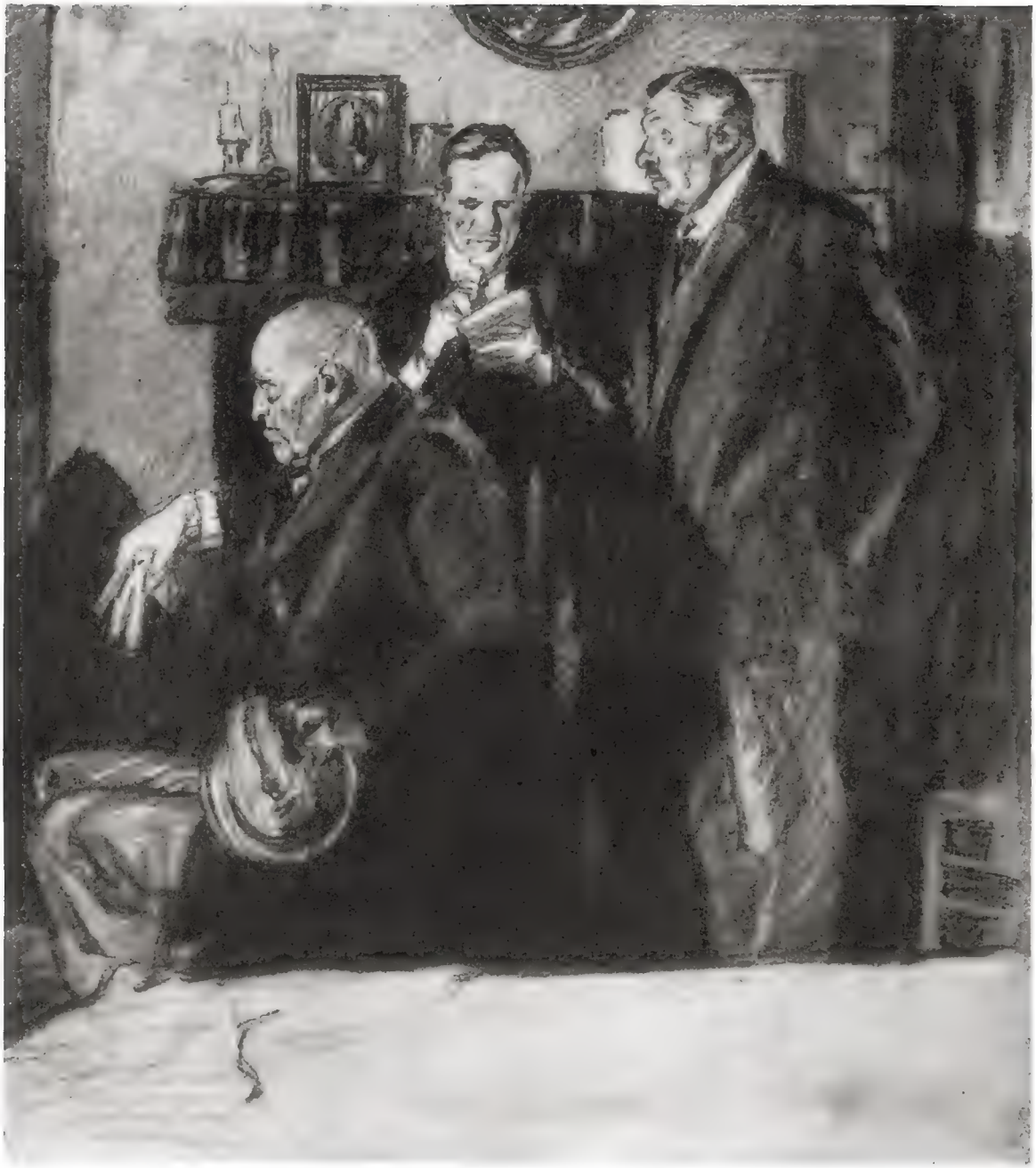
The massive face did not change, but the mouth opened as though worked by a wire: "He was," he said.

Henry Marquis made a vague gesture:

"Before we go again into our old quarrel," he said, "our friend here must understand the thing. It is mysterious enough, God knows,—the whole awful business,—when you understand as much as there is to understand about it."

He turned toward me.

"This is what we found," he said. "It was in the afternoon. It had been very dry—that long, unprecedented drought in England.



Then there had been rains in the north; the streams had come up. Fishermen were beginning to get out their tackle; the water would be 'right' that evening. So the thing that old Bradmoor had been concerned with at the moment of his death was precisely what one would have expected. He was a keen sportsman, and next to Dunn, he was the best all-round explorer in the world."

The Earl of Dunn made another of his abrupt, bookmaker gestures:

"Bar nobody," he said, "old Bradmoor was the best explorer in the world, and he was a good man with a rod, none better; but he could not ride a horse. He was a damned poor hunter; he had sense enough to give it up. And he was not a first-class shot. He could handle a heavy gun—a big double express; but he was no good with a magazine rifle. . . . . I don't know what killed him, unless it was that damned Baal from the plateau of the Lybian Desert. It's like Dunsaney's story of the Gods of the Mountain—green stone Johnnies who finally came in to avenge their imitators. It might be the explanation here. How do we know? A thing does not cease to exist because some one says it isn't so. Would the Old Bailey cease to exist because a little sneak-thief in Margate did not believe in it?"

Henry Marquis came back to his narrative:

"What we found," he said, "was this: Old Bradmoor was dead. He had been shot through the chest. It was a shot at the heart, but it had missed it. It was four inches to the right, and a hand's-width high; but the bullet was so big that the man was instantly killed. The bullet had gone through the back of the chair and lodged in the wainscoting. We cut it out, of course; but it was too battered up to say much about the sort of firearm it came out of.

"Old Bradmoor was sitting in the middle of the room.

"He was at least seven feet from the wall in any direction. He was facing a narrow window; in fact, it was a narrow slit cut in the wall. You know the sort of slit they made in the old days for archers. It is perhaps a yard high, and nine inches wide. The stone sloped on either side of the slit on the outside of the wall so that the archers could shoot to the right or left. . . . . You know how they are cut, and how the house stands out into the open sea."

He made a gesture toward the fireplace—toward the great house across the road to the south.

I nodded. I knew all about the house, and especially that wing of it. The sea had come sheer in against it. It had tunneled in a deep eddy, against the wall. The dead Duke of Bradmoor had been forced in his time to supplement the foundation by putting in another wall straight down to the rock bed of the shore. That stopped the sea-current from chiseling out the foundation; but it bored in here against the wall, on its stone floor. There was a sheer wall of fifty feet from the room with the archer's slit, to the open sea.

I understood exactly the description Marquis was giving me. I could see precisely what they had found. He went on making every detail visible.

"Bradmoor was facing this window; his chair was in the center of the room, almost precisely in the center of it. There was very little furniture in the room. It was more a sort of storage-room where he kept the junk gathered up on his explorations. There were maps on the wall, and a lot of tin boxes about, a theodolite, a compass or two—in fact, the traps an explorer would carry about with him. Bradmoor kept his fishing-gear in this room—all sorts of rods, flies and the like.

"As I have said, he was sitting in a chair in the middle of the room, facing this narrow slit in the wall; he was exactly ten feet away from it, and he was almost an equal distance from the door and the walls in every other direction. He had a fishing rod in his hand—in his right hand. It was tightly clutched in his hand. It was a long, heavy rod, fitted with a reel and line. He had some flies in his left hand; the thumb and finger of his left hand were closed on a particularly bright-colored fly. The man was in the act of attaching this fly to the line. His hat was on the floor beside him, with a number of flies hooked in it. There was a book of flies open on his knee.

"It was perfectly clear that the man had been killed suddenly, without warning, while he sat unconscious of any danger, engaged simply with the selection of a fly.

"The door to the room was locked, and it was bolted on the inside. All the windows in the room were closed, and had not been opened. No one of them had been opened. We were able to tell this on account of the metal fixtures. They had been turned to hold the windows firmly closed, and they had rusted in that position. The windows could not have been opened unless they were turned, and if they had been turned, the rust would have been disturbed.

"We sent an expert down to make sure.

"He went over it very carefully with a glass. It was certain the windows had not been opened. Besides, when we did open them, we were able to do it only with difficulty, because they had remained so long closed.

"THE markedly strange thing about the situation, so far as Bradmoor was concerned, was that the door had been so carefully fastened on the inside. Of course, whatever it was that ejected Bradmoor out of life, may thus have fastened the door. But if so, how did it get out of the room? The bolt does not connect with the lock. It is at least two feet above the lock. It is a heavy oak door. The hinges were sound—the door had not been tampered with; the lock was right, and solid. The door had simply been strongly secured on the inside, and that was all there was about it. The key was in the lock on the inside.

"There was no way to get into this room, or to get out of it.

"The walls were all solid. It is true that the walls were wainscoted, paneled in heavy oak; but there was no chance of a secret exit; we took the panels all out, and went over every inch of the floor and ceiling. We could not have been mistaken—there was not any way to get into that room, or out of it, that we could conceive of; and yet here in the center of the room, on this hot afternoon, sat Bradmoor in a chair, shot through the chest—with a fishing rod in one hand, and a bright-colored fly in the other.

"Of course, we took the rod to pieces.

"But it was an absurd thing to do. It was the usual big fishing rod, about twelve feet long, and rather heavy. There were not any secret rigamajigs about the rod, nor about anything else connected with the dead man, that we could find. He had simply been preparing for an evening's sport, when something killed him!

"You will not have failed to notice that I keep saying 'something,' and I suppose we shall have to keep on saying 'some thing,'—the curse of Sir Godfrey, over there, or Dunn's God of the Mountain out of the Dunsaney story. . . . . I don't know what it was!

"We had no clue to any assassin. Bradmoor had been pretty hard up, at the end—no one realized how hard up, until the complete collapse after his death. The servants had gone into the village. Of course, we looked them up—the cook, to visit her daughter who was ill, and the old butler to do the marketing. There was no one about the place, except the butler's mother, in a little cottage in the garden—an old woman, practically unable to move from her chair.

"She was the only witness we had to anything; and her evidence included two features only: she had heard a sound, which she thought was the back-fire of a motorcar—that, of course, was the sound of the shot that killed Bradmoor; and she had heard something leap into the water.

"Of course, she had a theory.

"All old women of her type have theories to explain mysterious happenings: the Devil did it! She heard him leap into the sea! Of course, she gradually supplied details, as such persons invariably do—details that could not possibly have had any basis in fact! The Devil climbed the wall, shot Bradmoor and leaped off into the sea. Well, no one but the Devil could have climbed it; it is a perfectly sheer, smooth wall, and descends fifty feet from the window to the water.

"Of course, we went over the wall. We scaffolded up from the bottom, and examined, carefully, every inch of it. There was not a mark on the wall! It is bare of vines, to begin with—and there is a thin green fungus over the whole of it. I do not mean a lichen. I mean the thin fungus that presently covers a damp stone. If there had been any attempt to scale this wall, we would have found the marks—and we did not find the marks; there was not a mark on it in any direction.

"We did not stop at the sill of the window. We went up to the roof. Nothing could have descended from above. There was a lot of dust on the roof—it had been long dry, and one could have made a mark on the tiles of the roof and on the gutters. We were minutely careful.

"There was not a mark or a scratch, either above or below that narrow slit of a window. No human creature could have climbed the wall and killed Bradmoor. The old woman's theory was as good as any—it must have been the Devil.

"But she was profoundly disappointed that we did not find seared hoof-prints on the wall. They must be there. We had not looked close enough! She wished to be carried out in her chair, so that she could examine it herself. She stuck to her theory. Of course, she could be persuaded out of her details—her amplifications of the thing. But she held stoutly to one fact—she had heard the Devil leap off into the sea!

"I put some of the best men from the Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yard on it at once; and they gave it up. Of course, we tried to get at it by the usual method of elimination. One had to consider every theory and see how it fitted the facts. How could anyone have murdered Bradmoor when it was impossible to get out of the room after having done it, or to get into the room if Bradmoor had himself locked the door?

"And how could the man have taken his own life?

"There was no weapon to be found; his right hand was clutched around a fishing rod; and his left hand was full of flies—with a bright-colored one between the thumb and finger. These things must have been in his hand before his death, and at the time of his death, for they were still clutched in his convulsed fingers.

"The wound was hideous. The man must have died instantly. He could not have moved after the thing happened. Every nerve must have been paralyzed. It was clearly beyond reason to formulate any theory which would have depended upon any movement of the man after the wound was made. The surgeons simply laughed at the idea.

"He could not have moved after the bullet struck him; and there he sat with his fishing tackle gripped in his hands. There could not have been anything else in his hands; and as I have said, there was no weapon.

"I don't think we omitted anything in our efforts to get at a solution of the mystery.

"Everybody in the country about was put in inquisition. There had been no one in the neighborhood of the house on that afternoon. We knew the names of each person, and his mission, who traveled the road that afternoon. We knew every motorcar that went over it, and every workman that walked along it. We knew where every man, woman and child in the community was that afternoon. There was simply no clue to an assassin. . . . And there was no explanation."

SIR GODFREY SIMON'S eyes batted again.

"Except mine," he said.

Marquis laughed. "Or Dunn's—the Stone God stumping down out of the mountain; or the old woman's theory. The country accepted that. It was even more popular than the theory Sir Godfrey advances.

"We have had a variety of mysteries at Scotland Yard during my time as Chief of the Criminal Investigation Department, and from Mayne's time down; but the Mystery of the Letts, the Rising Sun postcard, or the affair of the Chinese Embassy were nothing to this.

"In every other mystery with which we have been concerned there was always some possible explanation. One could make a hypothesis that did not outrage the human understanding; but one could not form a hypothesis in this case that did not outrage it.

"Now, that is an appalling thing when you stop to think about it! The human mind is very clever, very ingenious. When you present a mysterious case, it will furnish you with some solution but it can't furnish a solution for this case.

"Arrange the facts before you, and try it!

"A man is found dead in a locked room; there is no weapon, the fingers of both of his hands are gripped about objects that could have had nothing to do with his death. There is no way into, or out of, the room. There is a great, ragged hole in his chest. The sound of the shot is heard; and there you are.

"If you can formulate an explanation, you will be cleverer than the whole of England. There is nothing that the British public loves like a mystery; and when the details of one are given to them, every individual in the kingdom sits down to formulate an explanation. You can't stop him—it's an obsession. It's like a puzzle. He goes on doggedly until he gets a solution. That's the reason why, when Scotland Yard wishes to remove a mystery from public notice, it gives out a solu- *(Continued on page 170)*

"I am leaving for Montreal in twenty-five minutes," she said. "I put you all on your honors not to leave until noon tomorrow."

Illustrated by Leslie L. Benson

Jerry and James and John

By STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

Ailsa was the goal, the target, the treasure to be found. And the test she put the three of them to was satanically ingenious. You've never read a brighter or livelier story than this, by an author whom people are talking a lot about these days.

THERE was an old woman who had three sons, Jerry and James and John. She liked them better than hot cross buns, Jerry and James and John. But Jerry was hanged, and James was drowned, and John was lost and never was found and—but here, here, we are getting ahead of our story!

The story is Ailsa Coe's. And Ailsa, like the old woman, had three suitors, Jerry and James and John. But Jerry was Gerald Wynkoop, and James was James Catherbridge, Jr., and John was John Cabot Winsted III, and though they all belonged to the Ping-pong Club, and two of them had been in Harvard together, and a different two at Groton, they were not brotherly at all. They smiled coldly at each other and glared when they met in Ailsa's living-room—it had been her father's living-room before Ailsa came out—and frowned even more coldly and said, "My dance, I believe?" and glared when they clashed over Ailsa at the Junior Assembly. And Ailsa loved it. But she didn't love them.

At least, she couldn't decide on any one of them for more than ten minutes at a time, in spite of their numerous proposals. And that annoyed them, individually and collectively. So Jerry tried to be a sheik, and had to tell his family, next morning, that he had cut himself rather badly, shaving. And James tried making Ailsa jealous by playing the second most popular girl across the board, and was almost married to her before he knew it, and had quite a nasty time of it, while the unfeeling Ailsa looked on and laughed. And John, warned by these examples, went and did not likewise, but instead wrote an eight-page letter on his mother's best stationery—the one with the crest, a white sepulcher proper, motto "Where Is Thy Sting?" (Mr. Winsted the First had once been known as the Undertaker King)—telling her all about how he was going to commit suicide at twelve noon precisely because she wouldn't marry him; and at twelve noon precisely Ailsa sent him a wreath. So there they all were again, and still none of them liked it.

And now Ailsa, who was so much worth marrying, began to get tired of things too. And when she began to get tired of things, she changed them. Rapidly!

She carefully invited all of them to tea on the same afternoon. And when all three of them had glared at each other and offered each other cigarettes, and refused, and got up, and sat down again, and walked all over the new carpet like captive lions, she spoke.

"I think it is just about time I married one of you, for I am getting very tired of all this and wish to settle down," she said. All three of them jumped. Then all three arranged their neckties and began to say manly, devoted, beautiful things in a great hurry, so as to get ahead of the others. But Ailsa stopped them.

"I am leaving for Montreal with Daddy in twenty-five minutes," she said. "We expect to get there about seven-thirty tomorrow morning. I put you all on your honors not to leave New York until noon tomorrow. I expect you all to stay in New York till then. But after that, the first one who finds me is the one I will think about marrying."

At this they all made loud sounds of astonishment and joy, but Ailsa held up her hand for silence.

"Remember, you must not cheat!" she said sternly. "And just to put temptation out of your way, I will ask each and all of you who follow me to bring along the first sporting extra of the Evening *Trumpet*, which comes out just about noon, properly dated. And anyhow, if any one of you cheats, I will be sure to find it out, and I will have Daddy expel him from the Ping-pong Club, for Daddy is the executive committee."

Now, this was a terrible threat, so that all three trembled. And though this ingenious check upon cheating seemed to produce little emotion in the breasts of Jerry, the richest, or James, the most dashing, a sadness fell upon the countenance of John, the deepest.

"Can we go any way we like?" asked Jerry.

"Any way you like—on snowshoes, if you want to," replied Ailsa.

"And where did you say you'd be stopping, in Montreal?" said John, carelessly.

Ailsa smiled. "I didn't say. You'll have to find me."

"Can I fix things up about the wedding-license and everything before I leave?" asked James. "I suppose you'd rather be married in New York," he added as an afterthought.

Ailsa smiled again. "Of course, if you want to, Jimmy."

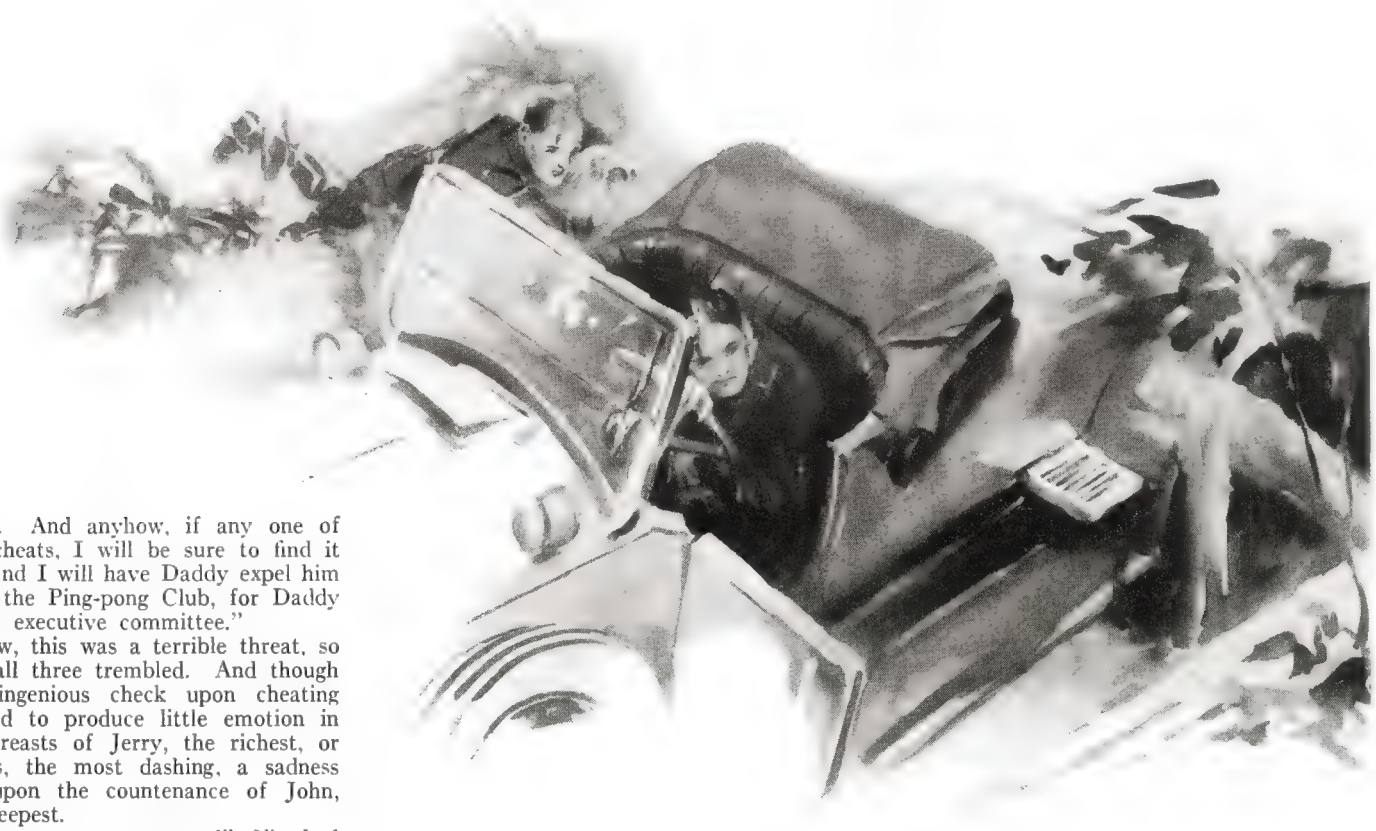
Then she looked at her watch and decided she had to run. And anyhow, the maid came in and said the car was waiting, Miss Ailsa. So Jerry and James and John escorted her to the car, and when they were all drawn up in a row on the sidewalk, like potted geraniums, they looked so appealing that Ailsa said they might come with her and see her off at the station.

So they all got in, and "Daddy's bank, Elmer!" said Ailsa to Elmer the chauffeur, and off they went, lippety-lip; and all the way to the bank Ailsa said this would be such a surprise for Daddy. And when Daddy saw Jerry and James and John filling up all the back of his car, he *was* surprised—so surprised that he turned light purple. Nor was his condition ameliorated by Jerry, the thoughtful one, who assisted him into the car as if he were an old lady on crutches. So, "Grand Central, Elmer, and damn' quick!" said Daddy to Elmer the chauffeur, and his grumpiness quite spoiled the rest of the ride.

Still, they were able to buy her things at the station—Jerry candy, and James, Egyptian cigarettes; but John, the deep one, only bought her a toy balloon. And then she had gone, and they met for one final glare before walking off in three different directions to plot for victory.

JERRY, it may have been inferred, was the solidest of the three. Even when, at seven, he had burglarized his china-pig bank to go to the circus, he had put it down in his diary as a temporary loan and repaid himself at the legal rate of interest. His unromantic mind had room for only two passions—the accumulation of gilt-edged securities was merely an instinct—Ailsa and his twelve-cylinder Lucrezia Borgia racer with the special body; and even these two crowded each other at times.

It was the sorrow of his existence that Ailsa failed to appreciate the Lucrezia. She sacrilegiously called it "that dago Lizzie!" when, as Jerry frequently informed her, it was the only genuine



Model Z Lucrezia this side of the Atlantic. The King of Italy had had one, but had been forced to give it up on account of the upkeep—for the Lucrezia was constructed of all the rarer metals ending in *um*, her garage bill was as long as a Fourth of July oration, and whenever she broke a part, she had to be laid up in cotton-wool while Jerry cabled to Rome for a new one. Jerry boasted, and not wholly without foundation, that she was the fastest thing on wheels.

On leaving the station, after seeing Ailsa off, he went home at once and spent two hours of consultation with the first chauffeur and a pile of maps and blue-books. When he finished, he smiled—a smile of anticipation and triumph. Then he went to bed.

Having decided that he needed sleep, he slept till eleven-ten. By five minutes of twelve he was dressed, ready and giving the Lucrezia one last looking-over. At twelve he started the motor. At twelve-one the second chauffeur burst in upon the scene on a motorcycle, riding desperately, the first sporting edition of the Evening *Trumpet*, purchased the instant it appeared, tucked under his cap. At twelve-two Jerry was off.

"Hello!" said the driver of the other car. "Hello there! Anybody hurt?" "No, damn it!" Jerry managed to say in a rude, weak voice. "Go away!"

When it was time to switch on the lights, and Jerry gave the chauffeur the wheel and began to refresh himself from the Lucrezia's spectacular luncheon-kit, he glowed with self-satisfaction. The Lucrezia had averaged fifty-eight miles an hour for rather more than five hours (including, it is true, one hour completely wasted on an unexpected detour and subsequent confusion), and was running just as sweetly as when she started. She had passed every other car on the road with a divine disdain. Jerry munched a sandwich and let happiness ripple through him like warm liquor. Even he, he thought surprisedly, even he had never loved her as well as now—the Lucrezia, of course; for though he did not realize it, beside the pure, disinterested fever of his passion for the Lucrezia's splendid haste, his love for Ailsa seemed boyish and slight and mild. He sipped scalding coffee from the top of a vacuum-bottle and thought that there never had been nor again would be another such car.

Only one regret was his—the Lucrezia's very excellence defeated herself in the measure that this, their supreme companionship, was to be so sorrowfully brief. The trip to Montreal would be over before it had well begun—and after that, whenever he went out with the Lucrezia, Ailsa would be there as well, to divide his interest. In his present mood, he would gladly have attempted to drive to the North Pole.

It was just in the middle of imagining that grandiose journey, that insult smote him on the mouth. The chauffeur, with a paltry regard for his own safety, had slowed down for a hairpin curve. There was a sudden noise from nowhere—a noise like a silver yell—a violent, dusty flash in which something appeared and disappeared on the road beside them as abruptly as a bullet—another, diminishing yell as the thing fled away. That was all, but—the Lucrezia had been passed, and passed by something on wheels. Jerry let hot coffee spill on his leg in silence. He did not heed the burn at first—he was sick with shock.

The Lucrezia—his superb Lucrezia—had been passed on the open road. To Jerry that was as if, and more than as if, he had seen a fellow Ping-ponger slap Ailsa deliberately in the face. His jaw tightened; his eyes got bleak. "Gimme the wheel, Biggs!" he said through gritted teeth.

For the next ten minutes he drove as he had never driven before. The scenery went past in a rushing torrent of darkness—the stars reeled in the sky. The pussy-cat purr of the Lucrezia's motor rose to a high howling drone—the speedometer jigged up to unbelievable figures. Jerry ground his teeth—ah, there it was!—a red tail-light, falling back like a dropped cigarette-end in the Lucrezia's path.

He glanced at the chauffeur with a grim smile. The chauffeur's lips moved rapidly—he seemed to be praying.

The other car was passed—Jerry jerked a look at it as the Lucrezia tore by. All he saw was a blur of silver paint and goggled driver, but he knew it must be the same.

For ten more minutes he kept up his unholy pace. Then he allowed himself comparative relaxation. Now that the stain on the Lucrezia's honor had been wiped out, his only concern was not to overheat her unduly. She was too much the gentlewoman to enjoy being overheated.

Five miles farther on, as Jerry was about to give up the wheel once more, the silver car passed the Lucrezia again with an insulting, melodious scream of its siren. His face settled into the lines of a furious mask. . . . .

All night long the incredible duel continued, a battle fought out by creatures no speed could satiate, whose searchlights, like bright long arrows, gashed the soft night apart. In half an hour Jerry had lost his way completely—and did not even think of it. First it was the Lucrezia who led, and then the other, and they passed and repassed each other like rapid silver threads in a pattern stitched in hurry beyond conception, and still neither of them weakened or turned aside. The night grew to seem to Jerry like a night spent in fever, long beyond belief. He grew gaunt and red-eyed—he could feel his nerves twitch at his skin like wires. The chauffeur had given up prayers and sat in an exhausted huddle, his eyes the eyes of a man who has forgotten everything except how to be afraid—but Jerry's heart was knit as if by blood or first love, to the roaring, mechanical heart of his Lucrezia, and all he desired in the world that fled past him like a blown leaf was her victory. The only other thought that his mind found room for was a desperate wonder as to the make and driver of the other car.

The end came a little after dawn, near the Canadian border. Jerry's eyes were blurring now; he drove like a machine; and the little puddle seemed to jump up out of the road at him, before he had time to think. The Lucrezia struck it, turned around three times like a trick-pony, smashed through a fence as if it were made of wax and came to rest with an explosion of blown tires in the middle of a forgotten haycock. Her motor sobbed and stopped. Jerry put his head on the wheel and began to cry.

He did not hear the other car scream by, triumphantly avoiding the puddle, nor pay attention to the chauffeur's rough attempts at consolation when the latter had succeeded in coughing the hay out of his throat. It was not until a car coming from the other direction stopped with a whine of brakes outside the fence that he roused at all.

"Hello!" said the driver of the other car as he climbed out, pulling off his goggles and stretching cramped muscles. "Hello, there! Anybody hurt?"

Jerry cleared his throat.

"No, damn it!" he managed to say in a rude, weak voice. "Go away!"

But the other man was walking toward him.

Jerry raised his head and stared. Realization came—sour as

medicated wine. Oh, this was too much! That other car—the silver body splashed with the mud of three States and a Canadian province—the goggled driver—the devil-car he had fought with all night long, come back to mock his defeat! He was suddenly savage. Waving a wrench, he climbed out of the abashed Lucrezia, threatening.

"Look here!" he began in a choking voice. "You better get back, you—"

Then he stopped. The figure that approached was trousered—but Jerry had attended too many musical comedies for that to deceive him. He choked over this ultimate humiliation: beaten by a girl!

"Oh, don't be futile!" said the girl in a brisk and friendly voice. "It wasn't your fault—I'd have hit that puddle myself if I'd been leading."

"Go away!" said Jerry again, but with less conviction. He felt an unreasonable desire to sob on somebody's shoulder, somebody feminine, by choice.

The girl paid no attention to him. Instead she lifted the hood of the Lucrezia and looked inside—a long and expert glance. Then she whistled.

"So that's why!" she said, and turned to Jerry with comradely respect. "I didn't think that any car but a Lucrezia Borgia—"

"Model Z," said Jerry, automatically.

She nodded.

"Model Z, of course. I didn't think anything else could have held me up for so long. But I didn't know there were any others over here."

"Only one in the country," gulped Jerry with a pitiful trace of pride.

The girl laughed.

"Only Model Z, perhaps," she admitted. "But—"

Jerry stared at her incredulously, hope dawning in his haggard eyes.

"You don't mean to say?" he gasped.

"Mine's a new one. Model AA—just out—brought it over with me when I came back—first long ride I've given it." She chuckled. "Some long ride!"

They looked at each other. Her smile grew friendlier. As for Jerry, he stared—with a worshiping awe.

"Want to?" She waved at her car. "I mean, if you're so interested in the Lucrezia—maybe you'd like?"

"Oh, *can* I?" said Jerry fervently. He followed her to the road.

HALF an hour later they were breakfasting by the roadside under the sleepy chaperonage of the chauffeur. She had taken off her aviator's helmet. How dark and vivid and personable she was! And her hands—strong, supple, perfect driving-hands! Jerry noticed all this with a sudden internal warmth that was better than hot coffee.

She was talking.

"Of course, I've driven all my life—love it—learned on the first Lucrezia Uncle Emmanuel ever made. Oh, we're American enough, but he likes to live in Italy—"

The niece—she was actually the niece of the designer of the Lucrezia! Jerry looked at her again, and if the look in his eyes was not love at first sight, it was something perilously like it.

She had become a little embarrassed.

"Seems funny, probably, but you know—I love—yes, I do—I really *love* cars—not just cars, of course—the Lucrezia, I mean—only people don't understand."

"People *never* understand!" said Jerry triumphantly.

Their glances met again—and clinched—if glances may be said to. At any rate, neither looked away.

Later: "I can give you a tow to the nearest garage, of course," she was offering. "And then—if you want to go on—I'm going to Montreal—lost my way racing with you—but now I know where we are."

"I'm going to Montreal too."

"To meet my uncle."

"A business appointment. Business," said Jerry, firmly.

"Of course, if you'd rather stay with your car—"

Leave the only other creature who understood the Lucrezia as he did? Never!

"If you could give me a lift, I'd certainly appreciate it," he said. Ailsa had crept down the backstairs of his mind toward oblivion—an outworn fancy.

They arrived in Montreal about eleven o'clock, many hours behind Jerry's original schedule. But Jerry did not seem to mind.

They discovered, with growing delight, that both were going to stay at the Hotel Royal. They parted lingeringly.

Jerry found himself trying to brush his hair with a hand-mirror in his room at the hotel a little later. He was also talking to himself.

"The most *wonderful* girl!" he was saying. "The most *gorgeous* girl!"

Then his memory jogged him. The mirror dropped, with a crash.

"But what the *devil* am I going to do about Ailsa?" he wondered with a groan.

JAMES was the dashing one, and his journey was briefer than Jerry's and more reckless than John's. He left about an hour after Jerry—in an airplane—delayed because he had forgotten all about the sporting edition of the Evening *Trumpet* till he was halfway out to the flying-field. He was always lucky at things like dice or bridge—and so he had a day of Indian summer—ideal flying weather.

As soon as the earth had fallen away from him and he was well in the air, an extreme contempt for his two rivals took hold of him—a contempt that widened as he flew, until it included most things upon the flat patchwork of the earth beneath. He had not flown much since the war, and now, as he nosed northward, with the tempest of the engine familiar in his ears as a voice, and the smell of burnt gasoline satisfying his nose, the last four years dropped from him. He knew now, what he had never admitted at the time, that the most satisfactory days of his life had been during the war. It had strained him and shaken him in many ways, touched him a little with madness perhaps, as it had so many of his companions; but when the war ended he had been still too new to be weary.

Since then he had done his best to settle down, but now, as he drove through a sky so clear and lucid it seemed as if it must be made of other particles than the air pedestrians breathed so casually below, the settling-down process came completely unscrambled. He was lonely as a lost archangel in that crystal medium, lonely and happy, as he had been both before, and all that had happened to him, between this loneliness and the one before it, mattered less than yesterday's dream.

He thought of Ailsa detachedly—the air had taken the color from her somehow, as sun bleaches cheap, gaudy cloth. He was doing this for her. Oh, was he? And if so, why? To a creature who hurled himself through crystalline emptiness with the arrogance of a lightning-flash, the difference between one girl and another, on the ground below, was the difference between one ant and its scuttling neighbor. He tried to recover the heat of his former feeling for her, but the wires had burnt out. There was only one reality—this buffeting progress through everlasting space, with the earth poor and flattened beneath him like a flattened tin can. This was life, and nothing else was worth a snap of the fingers.

He yelled at his mechanician. "This is the life!" he yelled. The man could not hear him, but smiled and yelled back. He smiled, too. He was content.

This Ailsa—when he married her, it would mean settling down forever. Buy a house—beget children—be tied to the earth like a plant. Not fly—not at all.

He remembered things—scenes gilded and painted by romantic memory till they glowed like the leaves of an illuminated missal—night-flying, the cold in his hands, in his body, in spite of any gloves or clothes—flying at dawn, through air like old brandy, through a heaven dissolved in rose—Paris from the air, the tall spike of the Eiffel tower—other flyers—the Crillon bar—parties—fights. These things moved him more poignantly in retrospect than Ailsa in prospect. There was no comparison.

He landed outside of Montreal, while it was still early in the evening. The intoxication of flight was still upon him a little when he registered at the Hotel Royal many hours before Jerry—as the latter might have noticed if he had turned back the register. As soon as he had changed his clothes, he sought the hotel's excellent bar.

After the third drink he began muttering army French to himself, and so fell into conversation with a tall, hawk-nosed Canadian who was standing next to him.

They adjourned to a table. It appeared that the Canadian had been a captain in the Royal Flying Corps. The talk drifted from the War to other, possible wars—to the men who had gone to fly in Poland, in Mexico, in other odd corners of the globe—to the general uselessness of women—back to the wars again. It appeared that the Canadian was fed up with piping peace—that he was leaving in a week for an unspecified country where—and here the conversation grew very confidential. Significant scraps of it were:

"Here, boy!" said Jerry. "This gentleman." The bellboy grinned. "Same for all three gentlemen. Long distance—New York calling."

"They need flyers like Satan himself." "My dear man, they'd give you a major's commission, if you're serious." "Serious? I'll say I'm serious! Why—" And it ended with James and the Canadian shaking hands over a bargain with weighty solemnity. It was then about two in the morning, and James departed for bed shortly afterward, his mind made up.

A major's commission—even in a Ruritanian army—and all the flying there was! There were no two ways for James. The thought of settling down a day longer suddenly made him sick. The thought of Ailsa—

Struggling into his pajamas, he wagged his head in some sorrow. "A knockout—Ailsa's a knockout!" he murmured. "But—"

JOHN was the deep one, as his dealings as soon as he had left the others at the station proved. The first thing he did was to take a taxi down to the offices of the Evening *Trumpet* and ask to see Mr. Doe, if he was there.

He saw him, and Mr. Doe said, "H'lo, Johnny!" as soon as seen. Mr. Doe was about John's age and they had been members of the same club at Harvard. He was also part owner of, and learning how to manage, the *Trumpet*. His uncle was the rest of the *Trumpet*, but his uncle was vacationing.

When John explained what he wanted Mr. Doe to do for him, Mr. Doe remarked severely that the *Trumpet* was not to be bought, and did he think he could corrupt the American press? Then John explained some more, and Mr. Doe chuckled and said he'd see what he could do.

"But it may be a monstrously expensive job, John; I'll tell you that. It might be better to get a job printer—" And again Mr. Doe threw up his hands. "What about the news? You can't have *all* the news in the paper before it's happened!"

"She wont look at the news," said John, who had thought it all out. "She'll just take one look at the date-line, and then—"

"And then you grab her, yes?" Mr. Doe laughed. "But what about the headlines?"

"Arrest in McCall Case Expected Hourly," said Johnny instantly.

Mr. Doe grew confidential. "You might work it like this," he said. . . . .

John left on the midnight train for Montreal. In his suitcase, still damp from the press, was a copy of the first afternoon sporting edition of the Evening *Trumpet*. The front and back pages bore the date of the following day, the inside pages that of the one then present—but that, thought John the psychologist, he could get around. He smiled pallidly when he thought of the money he had spent. Mr. Doe had, of course, been gratis, but a rush printing order of that particular description—

But if his smile was pale, it was *(Continued on page 162)*

The favorite amusement of W. L. George is wandering in great cities through the magic hours between midnight and dawn. The stories in this "After Midnight" series recount certain adventures that have befallen him "while honest people sleep." There's a thrill in every one. What would you have done under the circumstances related in this first story?

The Shot in the Night

By

W. L. George

Illustrated by George Wright

She'd killed him, that woman! Looking up at me,

I DO not, as a rule, seek nocturnal adventure in the suburbs. There is about the suburbs something too well established, too respectable, for me to hope there to come easily upon those turbid mysteries which entangle human beings so fatally in the coils of avarice or love. Thus, when one fine September night I was slowly walking back toward London from Woolwich, I felt disheartened and disappointed. In industrial Woolwich I had encountered only two men too drunk to find their way home, and made most uninteresting by that fact. Otherwise, the streets were so deserted that I lost patience, and instead of waiting for the first workmen's train, made toward Blackheath. It was about half-past four, and as summertime had just been done away with, it was still dark. There was a hint of thunder in the air. Thus, as I passed through the quiet streets, along their little gardens, and cast a negligent gaze at the shuttered houses, I could not help feeling that among the peaceful little lives therein there must be just one, an ambitious boy, a lovelorn girl, feeling disturbance, the painful electricity of the air.

If only one could see through walls!

I stood for a moment looking over the gate of a house, the front garden of which was filled with a planting of flaunting dahlias that shone white in the darkness. No, nothing! Nothing there but wealth, or at least comfort and ease. In silence I went on. The street endlessly wound on its way. Garden after garden, comfortable houses, one after the other.

At last, dispirited and very tired, I stopped for a moment to rest against the gatepost of a long, low house, built perhaps a hundred years ago. Its architecture interested me, for it had only one floor. It was one of those old country houses, George III perhaps, which London has absorbed as it ate up the fields. The front was covered with white stucco, and tall French windows opened into the garden, a portion of which was flagged. Upon the flags stood old plastered jars, in each of which grew a massive bush of chrysanthemums. I could not perceive details, but I guessed that the lawns were well kept; the distance between the house and its two neighbors showed that it stood in extensive grounds. Here again, I thought, as I leaned over the low wall which separated the garden from the street, here again wealth, and a life wherein nothing happened.

At that moment, as I stared at one of the French windows, I realized first that here burned a light. It was faint, because it had to struggle round thick curtains. Half-past four! Some one awake? Curious. Lights in the night always interest one; social life, love, sickness, death, all these call lights into windows. I stared at it for a moment. Then, just as I was about to pass on, I started, leaping away from the wall, then coming back. The sound of a revolver-shot had impressed my ears. And though I had seen no flash, I knew with the absolute certainty of instinct that the shot had been fired in the room where the light still faintly glowed.

I listened acutely for nearly a minute. Groans, the sound of a struggle, another shot, any of those would confirm what I had discovered. But there was nothing, nothing but silence. In the far distance I heard the horn of a motorcar, which sounded loud and near, so taut were my nerves. But nothing came, and still I stared at that window. What had happened there? Who there lay dead? The fact was such a shock to me that for a moment I proposed to find a policeman as quickly as I might. Then I felt ashamed: it is a poor adventurer of the night who draws the commonplace police into the extraordinary.

So, looking about me, and finding myself unobserved, I lifted the latch of the gate and tiptoed up the flagged walk, where my feet, trampling the gravel, seemed to make the noise of a machine-gun. A broad lawn lay before the window; for a moment, standing at the side, I tried to peer in between the curtains. But I could perceive only

she murmured: "For God's sake, don't leave me!"

a small portion of brown paper upon the far wall of the room.

What should I do? I couldn't rouse the house. If I did, perhaps a bullet would find its way to me, the inconvenient witness. At that moment, as I made an effort to reach higher along the wall, where the curtain hung more apart, I felt, with an effect of extraordinary suddenness, the glass of the window give way under my hand; the window was unlatched; only its weight had prevented its giving way before.

Trembling with excitement, I went on pressing against the glass that pushed back the curtains with imperceptible slowness, until a line of light appeared between them, a line of light which enabled me to see, focused like a small picture, the figure of a man sitting at a desk, his head fallen back, and one arm hanging lax by his side. So there was the victim! In such an attitude no man could sleep. I listened. There were no footsteps; there could be nobody else in the room.

There the man lay. I knew that I could do nothing, that I could force myself only into peril; but the lure of the open room, the smell of tragedy, were too much for my resolution. This was obviously no murder for the sake of theft. There was no sign of the desk having been ransacked. There was nobody about, searching. Drawing a deep breath, I forced the curtains open a little more and stepped into the room.

It was very much the room one might have expected to find in a mansion of this kind. The roof was low, supported by old beams. Over the tall wainscoting of carved black oak spread the brown paper, upon which hung a few prints after George Morland. The desk was covered with papers, and a heap of manuscript still lay under the dead man's hand. A table lamp with a reflector concentrated the light, but he was visible, with his face set, his eyes half open. There was no doubt that he was dead. The laxness of the pose, the uncomfortable hitching against the hard

back of the chair, all this spoke of death. But because in those days I had never before seen a dead body, a repulsion came to me. I couldn't touch him. I felt that I ought to do something; perhaps he was not dead; but a physical disgust filled me.

It was my conscience made me think of taking out a pocket-mirror, which I always carry to remove dust from my eyes, which are delicate. With a trembling hand I held the mirror toward the still lips. I must have held it there a long time, taking it back suddenly and finding, as I expected, that no haze had been left upon its smooth surface. The man was dead. Now, what was to be done?

I had been so occupied with his appearance that I had spent several minutes in this room, unconscious of something which now suddenly forced itself upon my attention. The house was not silent, after all. There was a sound in it, a strange, regular sound, from the next room. I realized that it was the sound of sobbing. Somebody was crying in there, a woman. A fiery excitement came over me, as tensely I listened to those sounds. These tears, I felt, had much to do with the sight that lay before me. Woman's tears—they must bespeak woe. But why was she not here by the side of the dead man? I looked with horror upon the figure so still before me, listened to the unknown woman weeping beyond a door, which I now saw had been left ajar. Once again I felt an impulse to flight, but now the sobbing was so violent that I knew I should never respect myself again if I left this creature uncomforted. So, striding across the room, I pushed open the door.

I found myself in a dressing-room. Another open door led into what was evidently a bedroom. With queer detachment I figured the geography of the house. I had come in through the study or library, and was looking into the room which faced the back garden. But while my brain worked coolly, my heart was stirred by the sight before me. In this room was a big armchair covered with a bright chintz, heavily flowered in blue. Upon it, or rather upon her knees on the floor, with her face down upon the armchair, knelt a woman whose shoulders convulsively heaved as she wept. Evidently she had just risen from her bed, for over her dressing-gown of green silk, unbound curly red hair flowed in heavy waves. I watched her for a moment, for there was something abject in her attitude. Her arms were outstretched across the chair; she made no attempt to wipe her tears. I had a queer feeling that she wept as if she were bleeding to death. Her plump, pretty white arms came out of the green silk sleeves. I was just about to go to her, when I perceived in one of her hands a revolver firmly grasped. . . . .

She'd killed him! That woman! It was she who had fired the shot. Obviously it was her husband whom she'd—

SWIFTLY the domestic tragedy took form: a maddened woman, killing, one didn't know why, the man who had spent a lonely night in the room beyond. But the tears interfered with the logical continuity of my thoughts. Murderess or not, she was crying, and crying so that my heart went soft with sympathy. I went up to her, laid a comforting hand upon a shoulder that heaved.

I expected her to start up with a scream, but I had forgotten how much she must need the comfort of human contact, for instead, she suddenly raised her head, gripping my hand. Looking up at me with a stained, blotched face, she murmured: "For God's sake, don't leave me!" She rested her cheek against my hand. Her sobs were louder now. She was repeating again and again some words I could not catch. It was heartbreaking and horrible, this woman with one hand gripping mine, in the other still holding the weapon.

"Of course I wont leave you," I said in a comforting tone.

"Oh, don't leave me," she pleaded again.

"Now, try and pull yourself together," I urged. "It's no use crying." At this her sobs increased so as to become almost screams; I realized what a foolish thing I had said. I did not know what to do. I couldn't stay indefinitely, to be discovered by the servants perhaps. So I used a heroic remedy. Freeing my hand by a violent effort, I seized her by the shoulders and forced her to her feet, shaking her vigorously two or three times. She gave a moan, a gasp, and suddenly her tears stopped. She was staring at me with open eyes, her mouth still convulsed, but silent.

"Now," I said, "quick! You've no time to waste. What happened?"

She seemed to find speech difficult, but she tried: "I can't tell you."

"Oh, nonsense!" I spoke harshly on purpose. "It's no use trying to hide. I've just been through that room, and I found your husband—at least I suppose it's your husband. . . . . Don't begin crying again," I said angrily, as her lips parted. "It's your only chance. Tell me what happened. You shot him, didn't you?"

"Yes." I just caught the whisper.

"Well, now, what's to be done?"

She was rapidly becoming composed: "There's nothing to be done except send for the police."

"I suppose I ought to," I said. "But I don't want to if I can help it. What ever made you do this?"

She was not listening to me, for she replied: "Is he dead?"

"Yes, he's dead," I told her. "I looked. But by the way, you haven't asked me what I'm doing here." She shrugged her shoulders. "Yes. I agree with you; it doesn't matter. I was passing outside; I heard a shot, and I came in."

"Well, you'd better send for the police."

"Why should I?"

I LOOKED at her more carefully. Instinctively, she had wiped her face; no doubt it was her beauty which inclined me to mercy. I realized that when all was well with her, this woman would show most beautiful features. The rough, ruddy hair hung in tangled locks, as if it had been raveled out of its plaits, for a green bow hung at the end of a strand of hair. Under gleaming golden eyebrows, large green eyes were looking at me piteously, and a very red mouth trembled.

"Look here," I said. "Suppose I'd passed your house five minutes later, I shouldn't have heard. I shouldn't have come in. Then you could have escaped. Now, look here: get your clothes on, and go as quickly as you can; otherwise you're sure to be caught. You'll go to prison for years. Get your clothes on quick. By the time you're ready, I'll be gone."

She seized my arm with her free hand, having evidently forgotten the revolver in the other. "Don't go," she whispered. Then, tensely: "If you go, I'll shoot myself too."

"But—but—" I said vaguely.

"Don't go. Yes, I killed him. I don't care. I couldn't help it. I had to. It couldn't go on. I couldn't stand it," she said on a louder note, which made me fear renewed hysterics. But suddenly she grew calm: "I don't know who you are, and I don't care. I don't care about anything. I don't care if they hang me. . . . . I wish they would."

"Of course they wont hang you."

"Listen. Let me tell you. I want to tell you. I suppose you think I'm horrible because I'm a murderess. I couldn't help it." She released my arm and sat down heavily in the armchair, as if her energy deserted her, but all through her story her voice was now audible though monotonous.

"The man you've just seen, who's dead in there, was my husband. We've been married for seven years. When we married, I was seventeen, and he was forty-five. I didn't want to marry him. I—I wanted to marry somebody else—my boy Dick. My mother—well, she didn't like Dick. You see, we were what is called nice people, and Dick was third mate on a ship in the merchant service. Mother said he wasn't—the right class for me. They wouldn't let me marry him. He was only twenty-one, and he wasn't earning much. Oh, I was bad—bad."

She stopped, and I said: "How do you mean, bad?"

"Oh, I ought to have stuck to him. I promised him. I told him I'd wait. But they wanted me to marry—the man I married. He was rich, very rich, and we were so poor. Oh, I ought to have stuck to him, my boy Dick—but they were too strong for me. I couldn't. I was only seventeen. Oh, you do understand, don't you? I couldn't. They were too strong."

"Yes," I said. "I understand. Go on."

"Well," she went on, "I married him. I couldn't help it. Seven years ago! He wasn't unkind to me at first. He said he loved me, and I suppose he did. And I tried to love him too. I did my best; I swear to you I did my best. But I couldn't. I was always thinking of my boy Dick, far away, and the dreadful letter he wrote me when he heard that I'd married. He was right, but it hurt me dreadfully. For a year or two things went well enough. I was very wretched, but I didn't show it. And my husband, he seemed pleased.

"But one day—I don't know how—he found out about Dick. I don't see why he minded. I'd married him; that ought to have been enough for him. I was a good wife to him: I swear to you I was. But he got jealous—jealous of my poor boy Dick, so far away, whom I hadn't even seen since I married. My husband began to talk to me about Dick. Well, I tried to say it was just a boy-and-girl affair, but my husband understood. He couldn't help seeing that I didn't love him. He thought it was Dick's

I went up to the woman, seized her arm. "Hold your tongue!" I whispered hoarsely.

fault, and so it was in a way. He began to hate him. He was jealous of him, just because I loved him. He hated Dick, and he hated me. Oh, you don't know what it's like. I hope you'll never know. To live with somebody who's got a grudge against you, and who's trying to make you suffer, trying all the time. I don't know how he did it, but you see, he was a rich man. My husband began to take an interest in shipping. He bought shares in ships, and opened an office. And he made a lot of money, for he was clever. Oh, I couldn't bear it."

"But how do you mean?" I said. "I don't quite understand."

"He began to follow the movements of Dick's ship. It was quite easy. He used to come in in the evening, and say: 'The *Cheronia* has been sighted off Sandy Hook. Would you like to send Dick a wireless, darling?' I didn't say anything, but it hurt. Or again, he told me when Dick was promoted to second mate. He found out; he told me. I don't know: he must have made spying a business. He told me how much Dick was getting a month. He even invented stories about Dick and other women, month after month, year after year. Almost every day he had something to tell me. I gritted my teeth together, tried not to burst out, but it was too much. My husband was using Dick as a cant phrase. Instead of saying, 'I forgot my umbrella today—how careless!' he'd say: 'I'm just as careless as Dick.' And in a restaurant, he asked me whether I'd like pudding *à la* Dick.

"But I didn't get used to it; it only got worse and worse. Year after year! I was going mad with it; perhaps I *am* mad. But it didn't stop my heart bleeding; perhaps I could have stuck it out, however. . . . . Perhaps he'd have got tired of it. For my husband loved me, you know, in his way; indeed, it was always after I'd cried, when I lay weak and sick with hysterics, that he'd take me in his arms and cover me with kisses which I hadn't the strength to resist. He always loved me *(Continued on page 108)*

The final chapters in this impressive story by America's most distinguished novelist and social historian have the majesty of the old Greek tragedies. Do not fail to read them.

Within these Walls—

By

RUPERT HUGHES

Illustrated by Arthur I. Keller

The Story So Far:

PATTY JESSAMINE had married the young lawyer David RoBards during the panic caused by the plague in old New York, when she thought her more brilliant suitor Harry Chalender was lost to her. So it was that later when Chalender, employed as an engineer surveying for the new Croton reservoir, came to call at RoBards' country place, Tulip-tree Farm, the young lawyer was sick with jealousy.

It was at Tulip-tree that Patty's first baby was born. A few months later she enjoyed a brief interval of gayety at Saratoga. And the following year, after the birth of her second child, she plunged into the social whirlpool with an enthusiasm that provoked gossip.

In the great fire of 1835, Chalender and RoBards were both volunteer firemen, and Chalender saved David's life. RoBards was so unlucky as to help in the necessary blowing up of certain buildings, among them a warehouse belonging to Patty's father, and Jessamine never forgave him.

Years passed; the city was rebuilt; work on the Croton waterway progressed. Patty's third baby came—and died; so too a fourth—though a fifth, David Junior, born some years afterward, survived.

Chalender was injured in separating two fighting workmen and was carried to Tulip-tree Farm. Some time later RoBards returned joyfully home from a trip to New York—and found Patty in the arms of the convalescent Chalender! RoBards could not bring himself to kill a wounded man; Chalender remained unaware that he had been discovered; and Patty's remorse seemed keen and sincere. Eventually, RoBards' anguish and bitterness abated.

And then—a new blow fell. Little Keith came crying to him that a half-witted youth, Jud Lasher, had carried off his sister. Near a lonely pool among the rocks, RoBards overtook young Lasher. Though he all but drowned the creature in the pool, he could not bring himself to the final vengeance; and upon Lasher's promise to ship aboard a whaler and never return to the region, RoBards spared him. He left poor Immy to the ministrations of his farmer's wife, and swore her and Keith to secrecy.

But a few days later Lasher passed by on his way to sea, saw Immy and carried her off again. RoBards rescued her in time. And now he did not stay his hand. That night Keith was awakened by a noise, crept downstairs, and led by a light from the basement, watched his father engaged in dreadful masonry—walling up the body of Jud Lasher in the foundation of the chimney.

About this time Patty met the great Daniel Webster at a dinner in New York and enlisted his aid in her father's claim for damages against the city. But even Webster's eloquence did not suffice, and when at last the case came to trial, the verdict was against

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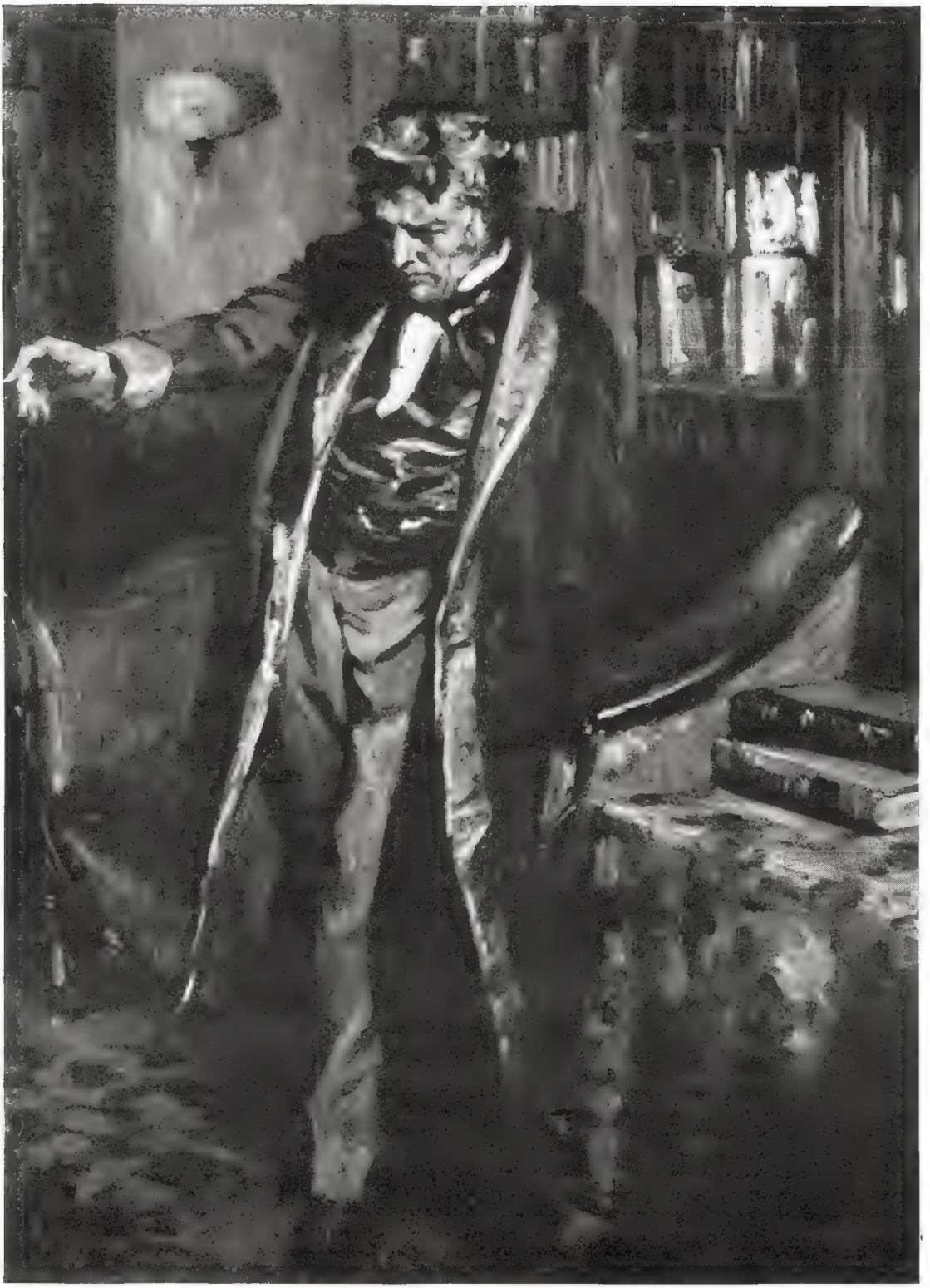


"Oh, Davie, Davie, what a darling she was, in what a dirty world!" He put out his hand gropingly; and something—as if it were Patty's ghost—persuaded RoBards' hand forward.

Jessamine. And shortly thereafter, at Tulip-tree, the heartbroken old man took a suicidal dose of laudanum. Dr. Matson mercifully gave a certificate of heart-failure—and the walls of Tulip-tree kept silence.

Immy was grown up now—as RoBards realized with a shock when Chalender, calling to say good-by before his journey to the new California gold-fields, said to Immy: "The first nugget of gold I find, I'll bring back for our wedding ring."

It was only a little later that RoBards overheard young Chirnside propose to Immy, and her halting story of what had happened years before—of Jud Lasher. The young prig gave over his suit at this news. And Immy, after a period of grief, flung herself into all manner of gayeties with an abandon that caused her father grave anxiety.

Eventually RoBards learned that his fears were only too well justified, and that Tulip-tree House was to have a new secret to conceal. They took Immy thither, and sent the tenant farmer to the South on a trumped-up errand.

It was on a bitter night of winter that Immy's baby was born—and died. And David knew from Patty's too-many words that she had—had not, at least, done her best to save the unwelcome life.

Immy recovered in time—and recovered, too, her reckless mood. So it happened perhaps, that she went about a great deal with Harry Chalender, newly returned from California, and eventually, to her parents' distress, Immy married him—her mother's one-time lover, her father's secret hatred.

RoBards' two sons were grown up now too. Keith was a young engineer, absorbed in his work. But David the younger was a sentimental lad—and he gave his father a new distress when he came upon the boy in company with Aletta Lasher, sister to Jud of hateful memory. "I'll marry you, Aletta," the boy was saying, "or I'll marry nobody."

And then—the Civil War broke out and took in hand the destinies of most American men. Keith went early to the war, but first he was married—to a kinswoman of the famous Julia Ward Howe. Harry Chalender came back from California, organized a regiment, and as usual won promotion and honors. And soon the youngest RoBards, David Jr., went off in uniform; and it was he who did not come back.

Some months after Junior's death Aletta appeared at the RoBards' house with a baby in her arms—and showed her marriage certificate; she had married poor Junior only the day before he went away.

Keith came home at the close of the war, as colonel of his regiment. But his joy was soon blasted; for his mother, he learned, was dying of cancer. Standing at the door of her bedroom, he heard her beg his father to put her out of her agony. And to Keith came the thought that he should himself save his father this final horror. *(The story continues in detail:)*

Chapter Forty-three

AS if some exterior power considered and ordained the deed, RoBards' mind was made up for him. He felt it his solemn duty to give Patty surcease of existence. He wondered only at his long delay in recognizing the compulsion.

He was puzzled only about the means he should use.

He stared at Patty, tossing there alone, and his heart sickened with love. Then he was more than ever afraid for her. For now she was in such an extreme of blind woe that she was snatching at her hair!

She had lost her last interest in beauty. She was tearing at her hair, crisscrossing it over her face, biting and gnawing at it, sawing it through her teeth.

He ran to her to rescue that final grace. He took her hands from it and smoothed it back from her brow It was soft beyond belief beneath his palm. It was deep and dense and voluptuously rich to touch.

He knelt, and holding her hands tight, kissed her lips and her cheeks and kissed her eyelids. And he groaned: "Good-by, honey!" Her eyelids opened under the kisses he had left upon them, and she gasped: "Good-by? You're not going to leave me? Don't!"

He shook his head and groaned:

"I'm not going to leave you; it's you—it's you that are—it's you that are leaving me. And may God send somebody to meet and care for you on the long lonely road, oh my beloved, my blessed, my baby, my beautiful!"

He knew that his deed must be done swiftly. At once, or never. So he reached above her and took into his hands the rich treasure of her hair where he had spread and smoothed it across her pillow. He drew it down like a heap of carded silk and swept it across her face, smothering her with it. . . . .

He held her, drowned in her own hair, long after the ultimate pallor had snowed her flesh, long, long after her hands had fallen limp and wan, their empty palms upward like an unpitied beggar's.

When at last he was sure that she would never groan under another of this earth's fardels, he lifted away her tresses, as if he raised her veil.

The first sight of her face broke him like a thunderbolt. Tears came gushing from him as when the sky is shattered with rain. He drew her hands prayer-wise across her bosom, and fell across her body, loving it, clutching at it. He could not cling, but he sank by the bed and spilled his limbs along the floor in a brief death.

As if his soul had run after hers to make sure that it got home safe!

Chapter Forty-four

ALL this while Keith had stood watching, as motionless as a statue, and with as little will.

He had opened the door just as his father bent and kissed his mother through her hair. He had understood what was being done, had seen that his intervention was too late. He could not save his mother as he had planned. He had to watch her hands blindly fighting for escape, and to abstain from help. He could not rescue his father from that ineffable guilt.

He felt as if he had stumbled upon a parental nakedness and must be forever accursed; but he could move neither forward nor back, to prevent or retreat.

The first thing that recalled his power to move was the touch of Aletta, the widow of David Junior. After hours on a rack of sympathy, she had fallen asleep at last. The silence had startled her awake, the strange unusual peace, the deep comfort of the absence of outcry. She had leaped from the bed and hurried barefoot to the room.

She encountered Keith rigid on the sill, and glancing past, saw RoBards on the floor. She thought he had fallen asleep from exhaustion. In the bed Patty lay blissful.

Aletta whispered: "Poor Mamma! She's sleeping, isn't she?"

Keith turned as if his neck were of marble, and stared with a statue's eyes. She ran past him and knelt by RoBards. He protected his eyes from the innocent trust in hers by drawing his eyelids over them.

Then he hoisted himself to his feet. Life came back to his every member in a searing current. His mind turned traitor to itself, and he felt that he was the most hideous criminal that ever soiled the earth.

To make sure that he had not merely dreamed it all, he bent and touched the hand of Patty, set his finger where her pulse had once throbbed like a little heart, felt no stir there; kissed her lips and found them cold.

He turned to Aletta and said:

"Your mamma—your mamma—our darling is—is—"

Aletta screamed and ran to the bed and verified the message, then dashed from the room aghast, crying for help. Soon the house was awake, trembling with feet. Lamps were lighted.

Keith took his father's hand and murmured before anyone else could come:

"I saw what you did."

His father recoiled in terror, but Keith said: "I came too late to save you by doing it myself."

RoBards needed, above all things just then, some one to understand, to accept, to approve. He was like a man dying of thirst in a desert who looks up and sees a friend standing by with water and food and strong arms.

He fell into his son's embrace and clenched him tight, and was clenched tight. There was no need this time for RoBards to ask his boy to keep this secret. The child was a father and a husband, and he understood.

THEN the room filled with the hurried family—Keith's wife with her child toddling, upheld by a clutch of her nightgown; Aletta and the tiny Jessamine, whom Patty had named; the old nurse whom RoBards had sent off to bed hours ago.

Everybody was ashamed of the thought that it was best for Patty to be no more, though it was too hideous a thing to say of a soul. It was a villainous thought even to think that Patty was better dead.

When Doctor Matson was fetched at last, RoBards was glad to have Aletta tell him how she came in and what she saw.

The Doctor looked unconvinced, puzzled, then convinced. RoBards feared that Matson would look at him with dismay. In the morning before a stranger, his passionate deed did not look so tender, so devoted as in the night. But the Doctor avoided any challenge of RoBards' gaze, and contented himself with saying:

"She was a beautiful little lady."

And that made RoBards remember how Patty had looked when she read in the paper the terrible word "*was*"—a terrible word for beauty, youth, joy, but a beautiful word for pain, weeping and fear.

Though new churches were being established in Kensico with their ex-members asleep about them, RoBards wanted Patty near him and the children in the litt.e yard where the tulip trees had grown high. The funeral was held in the house, and there was a throng. The road was choked with carriages. It was Patty's last party.

Even Mrs. Lasher hobbled over in a new black dress. Her daughter Aletta had seen to her comfort; and the pride she took in being related to the RoBardses was so great that her tears were almost boastful.

Since the famous son-in-law Harry Chalender, major-general of Volunteers, was still in the East, of course he was present at the obsequies. RoBards watched him with the eyes of a crippled wolf seeing his rival stalwart. The insolent dared even to ask if he might stay the night at the house, and RoBards could not turn him out.

But the thought of Chalender added a rancor to his grief. He was standing by his window late that night looking out at the tulip trees under whose enlarging branches his family was slowly assembling, when there came a knock at the door. He turned. It was Chalender—coming right in. He wore that wheedling look of his as he said:

"I can't sleep either, Davie. By God, I am afraid to be alone. Do you mind if I sit with you awhile?"

He did not wait for permission, but sank down on the old couch. It creaked and almost gave way under him.

"Don't sit there!" RoBards shouted, as if he feared an accident, but really because he could not endure the memory of the time he had seen Chalender there with Patty kneeling by him. It leaped back at him, rejuvenating his forgotten wrath. Again he wanted to hurl himself at Chalender's throat. And again he did not.

CHALENDER, perhaps remembering too, shivered, rose and went to the fireplace, thrusting his hands out, and washed them in the warm air as he mumbled:

"Many's the cold night I've stood by the campfire and tried to get my hands warm. That's the only sign of my age, Davie; it's hard to keep my hands warm. They're half frozen all the time."

He did not note that RoBards made no comment, but he looked down at the hearthstone and asked:

"Isn't that the marble I brought over from Sing Sing when I was an engineer on the aqueduct? Why, I believe it is! There

She ran into her grandfather's bosom and set his old heart clamoring. So there was a new Patty in the world!

was a poem I started to write. I have always been a poet at heart plucking the lyre with hands all thumbs, trying to make life rhyme and run to meter. But I had no gift of words.

"I spent half a night and fifteen miles trying to write a poem to go with that slab. It ran something like—like—ah, I have it!

"Marble, marble, I could never mold you
To the beauteous image of my love,
So keep the secret that I told you,
Tell it only to—

"And there I stuck and couldn't get on to save me."

He bent his arm along the mantel and laid his forehead on it as he said with solemnity:

"I loved her, Davie. You stole her from me when I was dying. You ran away with her to this place. When I called for her and they told me she had married you, my heart froze. I got well. My body got well. But my soul was always sick. I laughed and pretended, flirted and reveled, but I never loved anybody else—only Patty—always only Patty.

"And she—when she was afraid of life or death, she ran to you; but when she wasn't afraid of life—"

He struck his chest and opened his mouth to proceed. RoBards interrupted him madly:

"You say it, and I'll kill you!" he cried threateningly.

"You—kill anybody?" Chalender sneered, and RoBards sneered again:

"Oh, I've killed one or two in my day."

Chalender apparently did not hear this mad brag, for he was bragging on his own account:

"You couldn't kill me; nor could ten men like you. Thousands have tried to kill me. For four years the Rebels kept shooting at me and whacking at me with their sabers, jabbing with their bayonets and searching for me with grape and canister, but I didn't die. It seems I shall never die. Maybe that's because I've never quite lived. I loved Patty, and you got her. You oughtn't to be hurt to learn that another man loved your love. But if it makes you mad to hear me say it, maybe you could kill me. Then my blood would run out on this marble that I brought to her when she was young and pretty. Oh, but she was pretty, a pretty thing, a sweet thing. What a damned ugly world to let a pretty thing like Patty suffer and die!

"Oh, Davie, Davie, what a darling she was, in what a dirty world!"

He put out his hand gropingly in the air; and something—as if it were Patty's ghost smiling irresistibly—persuaded RoBards'

hand forward to take Chalender's and wring it with sympathy. So two souls, two enemies on earth, meeting in hell, might gaze into each other's eyes and find such agony there that they would lock hands in mutual pity.

RoBards and Chalender looked straight into each other's eyes for the first time perhaps, and each wondered at the other's sorrow. By and by Chalender sighed and murmured:

"Thank you, David. I think I shall sleep now. Good night, old man; and God help us all."

Chapter Forty-five

FLEEING from the oppressiveness of the farm, RoBards returned to St. John's Park, to find it alive with memories of Patty. He loved to recall their quarrels, her vanities, her extravagances, her fierce unreasonable tempers, the impudent advantages she took of his love, her hostility to all laws and orders, the elusive graces she revealed. He loved her for them, more than for her earnest moods, her noble whims, her instants of grandeur. A swallow for its wildness, a hummingbird for its teasing, a kitten for its scampers—a woman for her unlikeness to a man's ideals; we love them for what they will not give us!

Only a little while could RoBards revel in his lavendered memories, for St. John's Park was taken over by a railroad company as the site for a big freight-station. All of the inhabitants were evicted like paupers from a tenement. The quondam retreat of gentility in search of peace was a bedlam of noisy commerce, of thudding cars and squeaking brakes.

RoBards wanted to seal the house like a sacred casket of remembrances, but it was torn down in spite of him, and the place of it knew it no more.

The city seemed to pursue RoBards. The people swarmed after him and never retreated. Keith took a house and asked his father to live with him, but RoBards, thinking of what a burden old Jessamine had been in his own home, would not risk a repetition of that offense.

Again he lived at a hotel and at his office. Having nothing else to fill his heart, he gave all his soul to the law and became a mighty pleader in the courts. As the city grew, great businesses developed and ponderous litigations increased, involving enormous sums. His fees were in proportion, and finding that his value seemed to be measured by the size of his charges, he flattered his clients by his exorbitance.

For his own satisfaction he took up now and then the defense of a criminal, a murderer, a murderess, anybody who had passionately shattered the laws of God and man. And it fascinated him to rescue the culprit from penalty of any sort, to play upon the public and its twelve senators in the jury-box until they all forgave the offense and made a martyr of the offender, applauded the verdict of not guilty.

After all, RoBards thought in justifying his seeming anarchy, who is truly guilty of anything? Who would shoot or poison another except under the maddening torment of some spiritual cancer.

But nothing mattered much. His riches annoyed him, since they came too late to make Patty happy with luxuries. It was another sarcasm of the world.

It amused him dismally to furnish old Mrs. Lasher with money to spend—with a coat of paint and new shingles for her house, and credit at A. T. Stewart's big store. This gave her a parting glimpse of the life she had missed; and when she died, he provided her with a funeral that put a final smile on her old face.

This was not in atonement for what he had done to her son. That was only a dim episode now, with condemnation, forgiveness and atonement all outlawed beyond the statutory limitations. Time does our atoning for us, by smoothing sins and virtues to one common level.

Aletta was a more profitable investment for money. He made her so handsome that she attracted suitors. And one day she tearfully confessed that she was in love with a man who besought her in marriage. This meant that Mrs. David Robards, Junior, would cease to keep that sacred name alive, and when Junior's daughter should grow up, she would also shed the family name.

But nothing mattered much—except that people should get what they wanted as fully and as often as possible. He made over to Aletta a large sum of money on the condition that she should keep its source a secret.

The habit of secrecy concerning deeds of evil grew to a habit

He whispered in a pell-mell of hurry:

of secrecy concerning deeds of kindliness. He tended more and more to keep everything close, the least important things as well as the most.

He could not be generous often to his son Keith; Keith was too proud of his own success to take tips. He had chosen wisely when he made a career of hydraulic engineering, for water seemed to be the one thing that New York could never buy enough of.

Recalling when it seemed a ridiculous boast that New York would one day reach the Harlem River, RoBards already saw its boundary pushed north to Yonkers and eastward along the banks of the Bronx.

Up the railroad came an army of engineers with Keith high among them to stretch a dam at the very edge of Kensico, trapping the Bronx and its cousin the Byram stream. With the engineers came the laborers, and all the muck and vermin that had marked the building of the Croton dam.

Meanwhile, as the townspeople inundated the country all about, the greater tides of the republic overflooded all the continent.

"Don't let 'em have it! Fight 'em to the last ditch! And whatever you do, don't let 'em open the cellar walls."

When Immy had married Chalender, she had had to sail around the peak of South America to San Francisco. But now the lands between were filled with cities, and the farmers were pushing out to retrieve the deserts from sterility.

Railroads were shuttling from ocean to ocean, and it took hardly more days now than months then, for letters and people to go and come.

Letters from Immy had not been many nor expressed much joy in the romance of the Pacific Argonauts. The return of Chalender to San Francisco seemed rather to cause a recrudescence of unhappiness.

After Patty's death a letter came addressed to her, that RoBards opened as her earthly proxy and read with tangled feelings.

My husband is what he always was, a flirt incorrigible, a rake for all his loss of teeth. He still kisses the old ladies' hands and gives them a charitable thrill.

But I can't complain. I am so domestic that I can hardly believe my own eventless diary. I am plain and plump, and my husband, such as he is, brings home so many stories that I don't miss the novels much.

The neighbors run in with scandals, but I can usually say that Harry told me first. For the children's sake, I endure. I grow very homesick, though, and cry myself to sleep after my children have cried themselves to sleep. But oh, to have you tuck me in again, my pretty, my darling Mamma; and oh, to look into Papa's sad, sweet eyes, and the unwavering love that seemed to grow the greater as I deserved it less and less!

Finishing the letter, RoBards was glad, for some reason, that Patty had never seen it. She might have hated Chalender for being so fickle, but RoBards had heard him cry out in his loneliness, and he could never hate him any more.

He could not have sent him to hell or kept him there if he had been God, even the jealous God of Genesis. Yet if Chalender were not to go to hell, who could be sent?

So flaccid grew RoBards' grudge that when he received a telegram all the way from San Francisco *(Continued on page 164)*

Button, Button

By

Arthur Somers Roche

Illustrated by W. B. King

A twentieth-century Robin Hood—a gentleman persuaded by poverty to become a thief from thieves—is the engaging figure about which revolves this keenly exciting story by the gifted author of "The Day of Faith," "Find the Woman," "The Club of One-eyed Men" and other works which have attracted much attention.

DESTRUCTIVE brains! Slowly I opened my eyes; I yawned gloriously, drawing deep down into my lungs the winelike air; I raised my hands over my head and stretched until my toes touched the foot of the bed. I was conscious of my silk pajamas, the linen sheets, the silken coverlet. Through the open window I could see, in the distance, the green-clad mountains; closer, I could observe the seventh green of the golf-course. I rolled over on one side, burying my face in the downy pillow, to hide from the obsequious waiter the sudden mirth that had overwhelmed me.

The lifting, ten minutes ago, of the telephone that stood on a table by my bed, had been enough to wake into activity not merely this man, but half a dozen others, all of whose energies and thoughts had been directed toward the satisfaction of my wants. Oh, I tell you, I who have known direst poverty, that luxurious ease is worth the sacrifice of any principle.

And I should know! Had I not followed the path of honor across a bloody field in France, to learn that honor mocked me? Had I not adhered to all those righteous rules which the strong have laid down for the enslavement of the weak, and seen that adherence lead me from boarding-house to tenement, from tenement to slum, and from slum to the edge of the grave?

Honor had brought me starvation. What cant would term dishonor, had brought me a full stomach. Well, I had done with cant. The world had its rules; one must be productive or constructive, said the world. There was no place for those who belonged in neither class. And yet the lying world gave its best in place, in esteem, in what it terms success, to those outside those rigid categories. Steal, and be jailed: but steal enough, and be honored. Kill, and be hanged: but kill sufficiently, and be enthroned. The rules were made for the herd; but I, John Ainsley, was no lamb to be shepherded. I was the wolf who preyed outside the fold, and I had tasted meat. No more, while rascals stuffed themselves, would I go hungry. I had destructive brains. I would use them.

Yet I would use them as a gentleman must always use his strength, for though I discarded morality, breeding could never leave me. Not upon the lambs, nor upon the shepherd, but upon the beasts of prey who lurked outside, would I feed.

And I was savoring now the luxury of my first kill. In New York the famous jeweler Daragon—a cur at heart—mourned the loss of a bauble wherewith he had hoped to force a woman to his will, but with which I had forced the world to my will. Here in this resort hotel, I rallied forces that had been exhausted by months of suffering when I had played the game according to the silly rules that I now derided.

For a moment or two, after the waiter had gone, I merely looked at my breakfast. There was a certain joy, not explainable to those who have never starved, in looking at the iced grapefruit, the yellow omelet and the golden toast. And then eager appetite mastered me. I laughed as I found myself reaching for a fifth slice of toast. I must remember that times had changed, and that it was not necessary for me to overeat; as inevitably as the hotel clock struck one, so would I lunch. Last year, when the scanty, coarse meal before me must do me a day, or two days, or even three, it was all very well, even vitally necessary, that I clean the plate. But now I could permit myself a daintiness forbidden not so long ago. And as I replaced the toast upon the dish, I remembered that I had promised to be on the first tee at ten o'clock. I looked at the clock on the wall, found that I had but a half-hour in which to dress, and leaped from the bed. I was shaved and bathed, and attired with a certain correctness possible only to a gentleman born, and was at the appointed place, exactly on the hour. My opponent was awaiting me, watch in hand.

"Thought you might have changed your mind, Mr. Ainsley," he said to me.

"Am I late?" I asked.

He grinned offensively. "Oh, you're in plenty of time," he answered. "For a beating!" he added.

I looked at him; a tall, burly man, with protruding blue eyes, and thin sandy hair, he was exactly the type which, for some reason, is most offensive to me. I find that men with those characteristics, especially if their Adam's apples are very large, are usually vulgar braggarts. He was not the person whom I would have selected as my opponent. But last night, in the dining-room, an elderly gentleman with whom I had struck up a casual acquaintance on the course—I had played the last nine holes with him, and he had complimented me on my play—asked me to his table for coffee. He introduced me to his wife and to his daughter, and to my opponent of today, Ernest Vantine, whom I took to be the fiancé of the daughter. Kernochan, my elderly friend, expatiated on my prowess to his prospective son-in-law. Whereupon Vantine promptly challenged me to a match. In the course of our conversation I mentioned that, during a leave of absence in the war, I had played Westward Ho, in England, in eighty-one. Vantine had shown an immediate disbelief in my statement. He remarked that he had seen me driving, and that I didn't look like an eighty-one player to him.

"In fact," he had added insolently, "I'd be willing to bet five hundred dollars that you can't beat me, and I'm never below eighty-five."

I reminded him that I had played but little in recent years, and that I had no doubt that he could beat me. Whereupon he had sneered and remarked that he always found it thus: people talked low golf-scores, but when it came to reinforcing conversation with money, they usually crawled into their holes. His fiancée, Miss Kernochan, applauded his statement. I regretted that courtesy toward an elderly man had led me into the indiscretion of joining his table. For Kernochan was as vulgar as his daughter's lover. And suddenly, when Vantine began telling everyone within earshot that he had "called my bluff," an unreasoning anger possessed me. I accepted his challenge.

So, here I was upon the first tee, the cynosure of a large gallery, many of whom privately wished me luck, but all of whom were hopeless of my ability to defeat a man who I had learned last night was the best player in the resort. He had lied when he

"I was wrong," she corrected herself. "I understand law no more than I understand business. And the courts decided Mr. Kernochan's claim was just."

stated that his best game was eighty-five. According to my informants, and well-wishers of today, Vantine was capable of seventy-eight. He had won a great deal of money by making unfair matches with strangers, goading them into wagers.

Well, it was my own fault. I asked sympathy neither from the gallery nor from myself, but played the best golf I knew. It was not good enough to beat Vantine; it was not good enough, so lacking was I in practice, even to give him an argument. The match ended six and five, on the thirteenth green. I acted becomingly, I hope. I promptly congratulated Vantine, and immediately paid him the wager. He took it without shame. Nor did Kernochan or his daughter seem to think that Vantine had acted otherwise than as a gentleman should. In fact, people told me that it was Kernochan's habit to engage in a match with any newcomer to the hotel, and then praise the stranger's play to Vantine, who would promptly badger him into a match and a bet.

But I smiled as these things were told to me. I had been silly, and being silly is apt to prove expensive. I never mourn spilled milk. Instead, I look for a dairy.

That night I was as cordial at dinner as though nothing untoward had occurred. Miss Kernochan invited me to make a fourth at bridge, and I accepted. We played in the Kernochan apartment, and I won a few dollars. But I did more than that. I won the liking of old Kernochan, and even the sour-featured daughter and her pop-eyed lover were quite cordial. Kernochan, like all parvenus,—he was obviously that,—talked continuously of his wealth. I learned that he was a retired broker, and that Vantine was the chief owner of a detective-agency that bore his name. This latter fact came out when Kernochan showed me, as proof of his great wealth, a ring which he had given his daughter upon her engagement to Vantine. He brought it from an inner room.

"The setting is a little loose, so Alice isn't wearing it," he told me. "I shall have it fixed in New York next week."

I admired the ring. An enormous ruby, it was worthy of the warmest admiration. And I, who had dealt so successfully with another ring not so long ago, eyed it with longing appreciation. I encouraged the old vulgarian to tell me about the stone. He was not loath to do so, and I learned that the jewel had a history. It had been owned by a Russian grand duke who had fled to Italy when Kerenski came into power. He had disposed of it to an American millionaire by the name of Adams, who had died shortly afterward, leaving his affairs much involved.

"I had a claim against his estate, and I took this stone in settlement from his widow," said Kernochan.

I wondered, looking at his smug face, with the pious side-

whiskers and the mean, hard mouth, how just had been his claim against the estate. Idly, I questioned him—yet not too idly, for the stone attracted me. I learned that Adams had left a widow, who now resided in Boston and who was in rather straitened circumstances. Thinking of how comfortably that widow might live upon the proceeds of the sale of the ruby, I felt my distaste for Kernochan increasing. I made up my mind that I would have that ruby.

But next morning, starting for the second fairway, where the professional was awaiting me to correct a nasty slice that long absence from the game had produced in my drive, I came upon the Kernochans and Vantine in the lobby. They were dressed for travel, and porters were laden with bags. I stopped beside them.

"Yes, we're leaving," Kernochan told me in reply to my polite question. "A telegram late last night—sudden death of a former partner of mine; inconsiderate of him to die just now, when I am enjoying the golf, but it can't be helped."

His callous brutality should not have affected me, but I marked it up against him. I too felt that his partner was inconsiderate; I wanted the ruby, and it was going away. I murmured an insincere condolence. I turned to Vantine.

"I'd hoped, with a little practice, to take you on again," I told him.

"Well, there are other golf-courses," he leered.

"I live at Greenwich, Mr. Ainsley," said Kernochan. "In a few weeks the courses around there will be in good condition. If you're in New York—"

"Thank you very much," I told him warmly.

And the next day I too left Pinehurst. Two evenings later I was in Boston; and twenty-four hours after my arrival I had read and digested, in newspaper files, the life and death of the Henry Adams whose widow had surrendered the great ruby to Benjamin Kernochan. For you see, when I make up my mind, I am very much in earnest.

I had read of supercrooks; I had met one in the flesh, and almost under his eyes had abstracted a jewel for the possession of which he had made his supercrook plans. I had told myself then that the so-called supercrooks succeeded merely because of the low intelligence of the police opposed to them. If low cunning—which was all my supercrook possessed—could achieve success, what would the intelligence of a gentleman achieve?

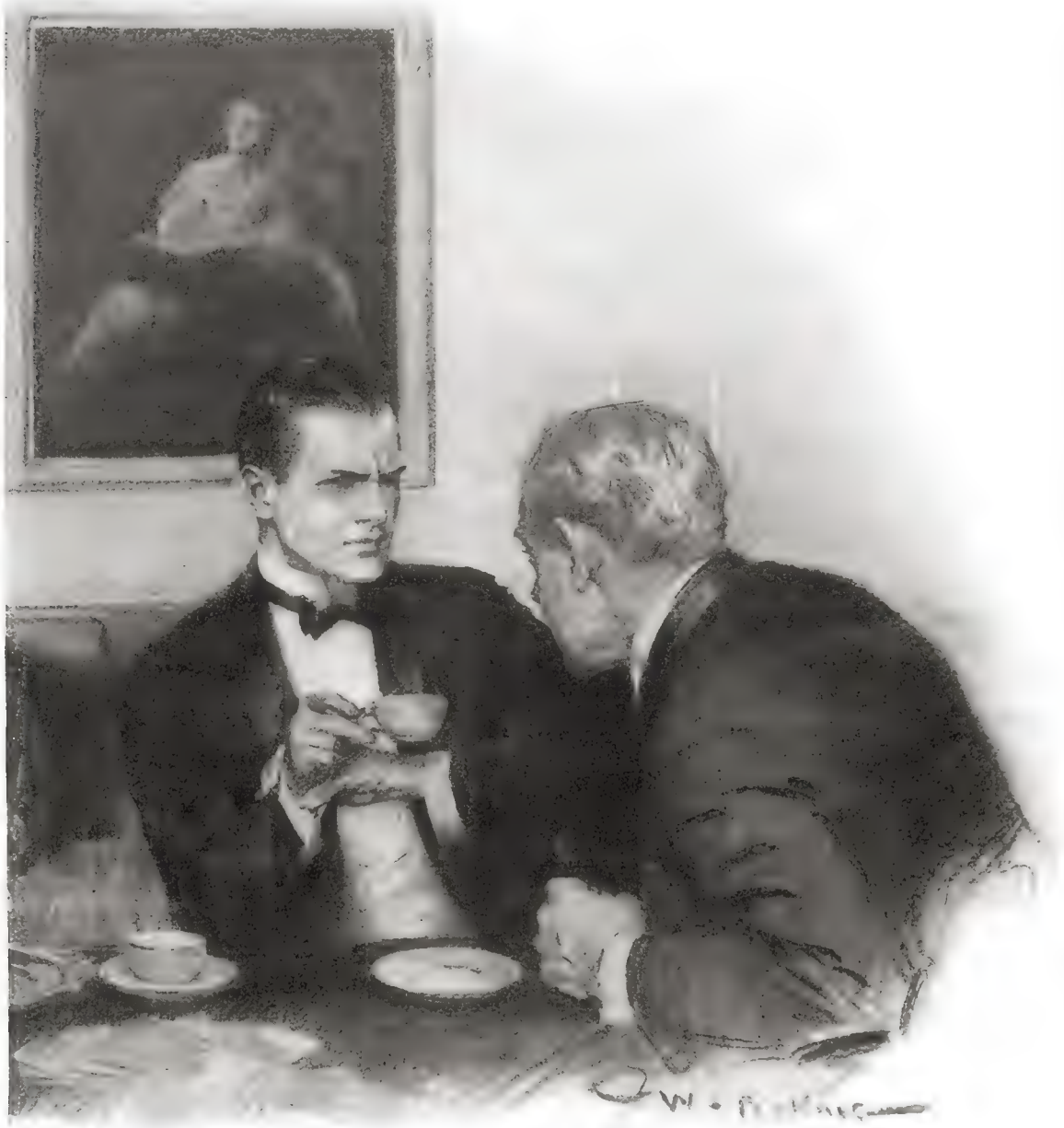
I had answered that question satisfactorily. By one bit of sleight-of-hand I had made more money than honest drudgery would have earned me in a lifetime. For I had no profession. Born to expectations which had not been fulfilled, I found myself, at thirty, possessed of an aristocratic birth, a cosmopolitan education and—nothing else. I was a living sermon of the futility of the gentleman. For the day when the mere being a gentleman entitled one to a decent and honorable living has passed forever. The world has no respect for fine instincts; it pays its tribute to fine gold.

Instead of picking up Vantine's cup, I chose the one meant for me. Before I could put it to my lips, Vantine's fingers clutched my wrist. "So, that's where you hid it!" he cried.

I had intelligence; that I knew. But in addition to a good mind—which had never been used—I had only a gift for sleight-of-hand, assiduously cultivated during my youth. That contemptible accomplishment, however, had been sufficient, coupled with a quick wit, to enable me to do what a supercrook had failed to achieve.

Yet, with all my contempt for the intelligence of the police, I had vowed that I would, if possible, confine my efforts to fields in which the police had no concern. I would rob thieves. But here, at the very outset of my new career, I found myself planning to steal from one who was not a thief. Pride entered into the affair. Kernochan and Vantine thought me a wealthy fool who could be rooked with impunity. I would endeavor to show them that they had been mistaken. And in furtherance of that endeavor, I made a call upon Mrs. Henry Adams.

I found her in a modest boarding-house on Beacon Hill. I introduced myself as one who planned writing a book on historic jewels. Two days of hasty reading in the Public Library had qualified me to speak learnedly upon the subject of precious stones



—wisely enough, at least, to deceive any but a jeweler. Furthermore, as I explained to Mrs. Adams, my book was to deal with the romance of jewels, rather than with technicalities.

"But why come to me, Mr. Ainsley?" she asked.

"You are the owner of the Grand Duke's ruby," I replied.

"Not any longer," she told me, shaking her white head.

I assumed an expression of surprise. "I understood that your husband had acquired it," said I.

"That is true; but since my husband's death, the stone has passed from my possession," she informed me. Then, in response to my questioning look, she told me the things that I wished to know. "My husband and I, Mr. Ainsley, have always been simple people. We never expected to own such a thing as the Grand Duke's ruby, and we acquired it almost accidentally. My husband was a broker. He was in Italy, arranging for the flotation of some Italian bank-stock in this country. While there, he met the Duke, who was in great need of money. He wished to sell the ruby, and experts assured my husband that the price, one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, was hardly half the jewel's real value. My husband had considerable cash available at the time. It looked like a good investment, and so he bought it. But neither of us ever intended that I should wear it. I am afraid,"—and she smiled whimsically,—"that I am not the type of woman who could successfully wear such a ring."

I agreed with her, although I protested otherwise. But she laughed at me.

"I am a simple countrywoman, Mr. Ainsley. I never could be a grand lady, and never wanted to be one. And Henry, my husband, was a countryman. In search of a living, Henry came to Boston when he was a boy; he always hoped to save enough to buy a farm. You know how those things are. By the time Henry had ten thousand dollars, he was involved in business. By the time he possessed one hundred thousand, he was more deeply involved in affairs. Then, when his fortune amounted to more than a million, his entanglements were so great that his withdrawal from business might have injured scores of other people. We bought the farm, but how seldom we saw it! And then, just before he died, he determined definitely to get out of the city. I don't understand business, Mr. Ainsley, and so I cannot tell you just how it was that Henry's estate, which I had thought to be worth at least three million dollars, amounted, when all the claims against it were settled, to less than twenty thousand.

"But he had entered into some sort of an arrangement with another broker named Kernochan; and Kernochan had papers that seemed to prove that Henry was entirely responsible for certain vast debts incurred under that arrangement." Her gray eyes gleamed. I sensed the fire within this sweet and simple lady.

"You say those papers *seemed* to prove certain things," I commented.

"I was wrong," she corrected herself. "I understand law no more than I understand business. And the courts decided that Mr. Kernochan's claim was just. So it is not becoming in me to discuss the matter. But,"—and she smiled again,—"you see that I no longer own the ruby."

"I am sorry," I told her. And indeed I was. She was so courageous, and her voice when she mentioned her husband's name was so sad, that my heart went out to her. I have known widows who would have berated their husbands for leaving them unprovided for, but Mrs. Adams was not that kind. The memory of her husband was her dearest possession, infinitely more valuable than the Grand Duke's jewel. I felt a wave of sentiment engulfing me; but I metaphorically swam to shore. My business held no room for sentiment. And so I broached the real reason for my call.

"I had hoped," I said, "to obtain a photograph of the ruby ring. I plan to illustrate my text."

I waited for her reply; upon it everything depended. And luck was with me.

"I have a paste copy of the ring," she told me. "Henry had it made immediately upon his return to America with the stone. You see,"—and her faded cheeks colored prettily,—"I wasn't quite honest a moment ago. I am a countrywoman; but still, I am a woman. And I did want to wear that ring. Everyone knew that Henry owned it, and—one is as silly at sixty as at sixteen.

Sillier! And yet the jewel was too precious. So Henry had the copy made, and once or twice I wore it. I wonder if all realities are shams, and all shams realities. Anyway, I have the copy, and if that would do you any good, I am quite sure that you are welcome to it."

I turned my head away, lest she observe the gleam in my eye. It was with difficulty that I kept my voice steady, as I assured her that I would be most grateful if she would lend me the imitation for a few weeks.

Half an hour later I left her. For the first time since I had definitely adopted my new profession, I felt sick at heart. For Mrs. Adams had insisted that I stay to tea with her. Knowing her poverty, I was loath to add the slightest expense to her straitened budget. Yet it was not that which made me swallow her food and drink with effort: it was the fact that this brave old lady, who somehow made me think of a russet apple, wrinkled as to skin, but sound and sweet within, thought me to be as honest as herself. She questioned me about my life, my family, and I fed her lies. I was sick and ashamed, and wrathful at the weakness which made me feel this way when I left her. I sent her the finest box of candy the city could provide, yet somehow seemed to feel that my gift was an insult. For a moment I was tempted to abandon my project; then my own self-disgust roused in me an anger toward Kernochan.

For some things we need no proof susceptible to analysis by the five senses. A sixth sense tells us truth. Just as a child somehow knows truth, by instinct, so we adults occasionally preserve the gift of childhood. I say that instinct lives within us all, the heritage of a thousand generations, and that we are fools who disdain it and prefer our lying senses. I *knew*, as definitely as though I had witnessed the performance of the chicanery, that Kernochan had swindled Adams' widow. He deserved to lose the ruby.

There was something else, too. Vantine was a famous detective, as well as a boorish cheat. At least, he had inherited a great detective-agency. He had thought me a stupid gull; it would afford me a certain peculiar satisfaction if I repaid his opinion of me by taking his fiancée's ring. I do not mind losing a wager to a gentleman; but a man who will inveigle strangers into unfair speculation, is a cad and deserves punishment.

Besides, if I must be honest,—and it affords me, who am a thief, a peculiar joy to indulge myself, in these memoirs, in the unusual luxury of honesty,—the Grand Duke's ruby was worth three hundred thousand dollars. I know no arguments that could seem so potent to me.

So behold me, two weeks later, driving into the Kernochan estate at Greenwich. I, who had gone a year without being able to afford a ride in a taxicab, now sat behind the wheel of my roadster. On the trunk-rack behind was a box in which were evening clothes, lounge-suits, shirts of finest linen, silken socks, and all those other concomitants of wealth. Wedged in the seat beside me were my golf-sticks. I looked, with all my furnishings, what I was: a gentleman. I also looked what I was not: a millionaire.

I had taken the precaution of telephoning from the near-by town of Stamford; and so, when I arrived at the vulgarly ostentatious residence of Kernochan, Vantine was there. It was a Saturday, and I had felt fairly certain that the detective would spend a week-end at the home of his fiancée. My logic was justified by the event. For Miss Kernochan had answered my telephone call, had invited me to luncheon, and had assured me that Vantine would doubtless be willing to offer me revenge.

I acted swiftly. True, I risked a broken leg, but it was only a chance. Arrest meant certain imprisonment.

Vantine was willing; indeed, he was anxious. We arranged that we should play on the course of a near-by club, immediately after luncheon.

It irked me to accept the Kernochan hospitality; but all professions have their disagreeable sides. And so I ate their food with relish. I will say for Kernochan that his cook was good. That is about all I can say for him. For not merely was he boastful as to his wealth, but he showed an unpardonable curiosity toward myself. I indulged myself in a certain gift for fiction. I named a city in the West as my home. I skillfully created the impression that I was immensely rich, that a wound received in the war had incapacitated me for active work, and that I divided my time between America and Europe, wandering wherever I thought I might find amusement. I told them that I had acquired my car at Pinehurst and had motored north, golfing on the way. Also I warned Vantine that my game had improved, and suggested that we make the stakes a thousand dollars this time. He accepted with elation.

Three hours later, on the fifteenth green, I handed him a thousand dollars.

"I can't understand it," I said pettishly. "I just can't get going today."

He grinned. Had he chosen, he could have won earlier, and my excuse was ridiculous. "We might play again tomorrow," he suggested.

"For two thousand dollars," I cried.

He turned away to hide a smirk. "Just as you say," he replied.

I had yielded to Kernochan's solicitous invitation that I dine with them and play some bridge later. In addition to his *(Continued on page 120)*

Illustrated by Frank Godwin

"Well, you know how business is. I tell you frankly, this is no time for play. Got to stick to things."

Squizzer's Lame Duck

By LAWRENCE PERRY

He was up against it—hard. And he had to think of Nancy, too. They had him crowded into a corner fighting for his very life. Here's a story for every man—and for every man's wife as well—by a favorite Red Book author.

MEN who never tell their business troubles or worries to their wives may be divided, roughly speaking, into two classes: The first are congenitally disinclined to lower a cherished and sedulously maintained pose of self-sufficiency in fields of masculine endeavor. The minority of the second part keep business difficulties aloof from the mistress of the household through disbelief in her ability either to assist through her wisdom, to encourage through her faith, or through her discernment adequately to sympathize.

Realizing the folly of applying general rules to individual cases, it may none the less be submitted that both classes are dead wrong. Many is the night, for example, that Adrian Dick, New York manager of the Chicago banking firm of Piper and Company, had gone to bed, his soul purged of doubt, simply because he had sat in his easy-chair under the soft light and let Nancy Dick run her fingers through his hair while he poured his perplexities into the alembic of her understanding mind and watched them **resolve** into nothingness.

"Late tonight, aren't you, dear?" Nancy Dick, who had advanced from the veranda through the little rose-garden path to meet her husband, regarded him with keen, speculative eyes. "I heard your train come in. Then you didn't appear. I thought perhaps you'd been kept at the office."

Adrian Dick, who was small and wiry and had the face and head of a scholar, pushed into proper position his eyeglasses, which characteristically had slipped down upon his nose, and smiled self-consciously. "No, I was on the train," he said. "But

I was thinking, and walked six blocks beyond our street."

"Oh — thinking." Nancy nodded. Then she smiled.

Adrian paused, took off his hat and lifted his face to the soft air.

"Did you ever see a more beautiful day? Never knew a more perfect June. Makes me more sorry than ever we stored the car, Nancy." Adrian's face, which had begun to lighten, resumed the harassed, preoccupied expression it had worn as he came up the walk.

Nancy laid her hand upon his shoulder.

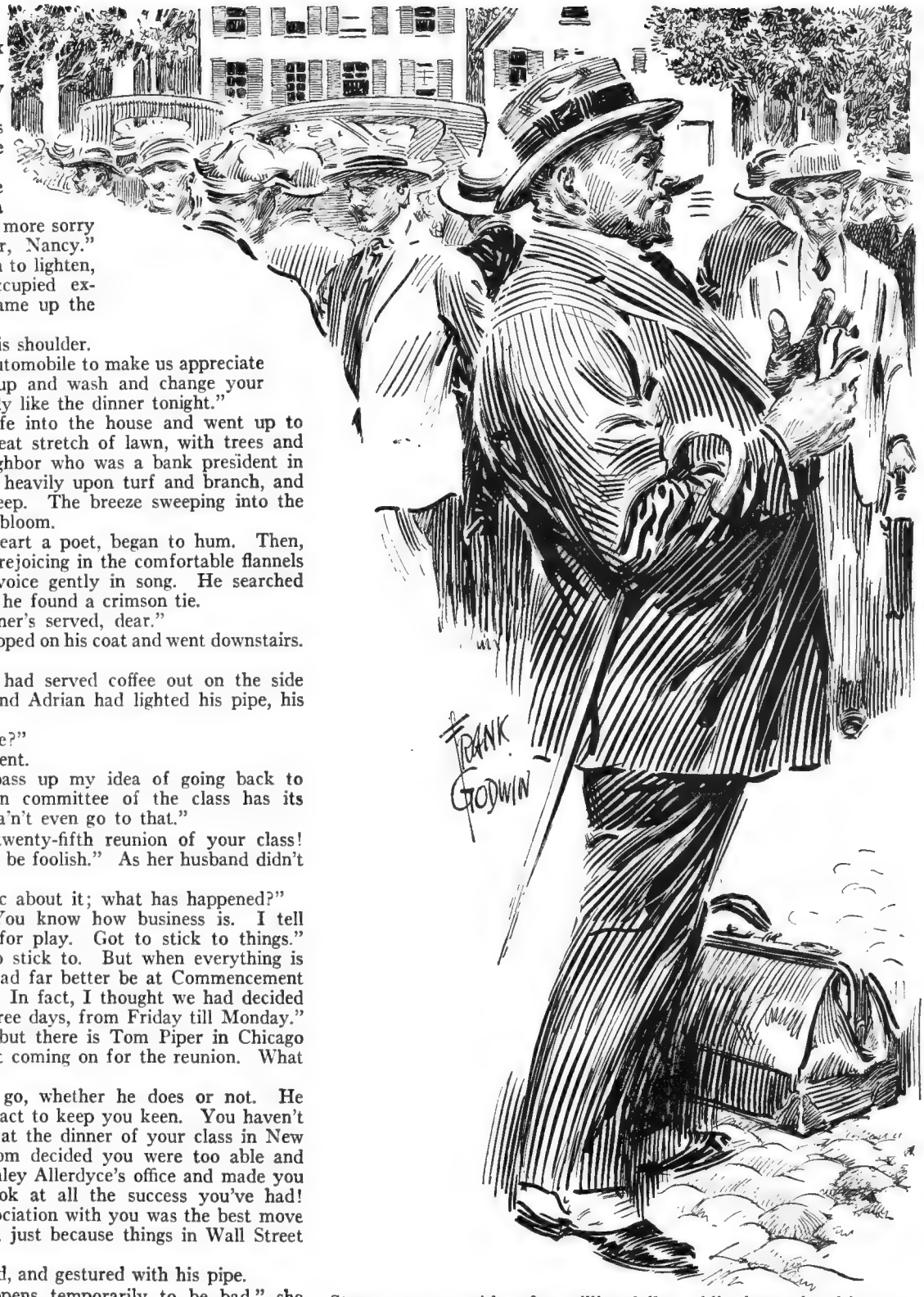
"Adrian, we don't need an automobile to make us appreciate this weather. Now, you go up and wash and change your clothes. I think you'll specially like the dinner tonight."

Adrian accompanied his wife into the house and went up to his room. It gave upon a great stretch of lawn, with trees and shrubs, the property of a neighbor who was a bank president in New York. The sunlight lay heavily upon turf and branch, and the shadows were cool and deep. The breeze sweeping into the open windows was laden with bloom.

Adrian Dick, who was at heart a poet, began to hum. Then, cool and fresh from his bath, rejoicing in the comfortable flannels and soft shirt, he lifted his voice gently in song. He searched through a bureau drawer until he found a crimson tie.

"Adrian—oh, Adrian! Dinner's served, dear."

"All right. Coming." He slipped on his coat and went downstairs.



WHEN, finally, the maid had served coffee out on the side veranda and departed, and Adrian had lighted his pipe, his wife turned to him.

"Well, how has the day gone?"

He didn't reply for a moment.

"I've decided, Nancy, to pass up my idea of going back to Commencement. The reunion committee of the class has its final meeting tomorrow. I sha'n't even go to that."

"You're not going to the twenty-fifth reunion of your class! Of *course* you're going. Don't be foolish." As her husband didn't reply, Nancy went on:

"You've been so enthusiastic about it; what has happened?"

"Well—" He gestured. "You know how business is. I tell you frankly, this is no time for play. Got to stick to things."

"Yes—if there are things to stick to. But when everything is so dead, it seems to me you had far better be at Commencement than moping about the office. In fact, I thought we had decided about that. It will be only three days, from Friday till Monday."

"I know," frowned Dick, "but there is Tom Piper in Chicago stewing and fretting. He isn't coming on for the reunion. What would he think of me?"

"Tom would want you to go, whether he does or not. He knows you need just that contact to keep you keen. You haven't forgotten, I hope, that it was at the dinner of your class in New York three years ago that Tom decided you were too able and fine to be a stock-clerk in Stanley Allerdyce's office and made you his New York manager. Look at all the success you've had! Tom told me last year his association with you was the best move he had ever made. And now, just because things in Wall Street happen to be sagging—"

"Sagging!" Adrian grimaced, and gestured with his pipe.

"Just because business happens temporarily to be bad," she went on, "you feel you have to slump with it. Nonsense, Adrian! You simply are going to the reunion and have the time of your life and come back, as you say, ready to push a bridge over." She regarded him keenly. "Just what happened today?"

Dick puffed silently for a moment.

"Tom Piper got an awful wallop. Talked to him over the long distance. He's plumb scared. I wish I could help him; a lot depends on it—maybe the safety of the firm. I don't know. It's a forlorn situation."

"What situation?"

"Why, the one I'm talking about. You see, some time ago Piper and Company took over the five-million-dollar issue of Buffer State road bonds. There are no better securities going, of course. The main office in Chicago had just come to a point where the selling campaign was to be launched, when the same State came out with a five-million-dollar soldier-bonus bond-issue. They pay more. You can see how Piper and Company are stuck."

"You mean—"

"I mean that the Western public doesn't want Buffer State bonds at four per cent when they can have Buffer State bonds that pay four and a half."

"No, naturally not.. I hardly think that was fair, or even honest, do you?"

"Oh,"—Adrian Dick shrugged,—"it's the way business goes. Anyway, Tom has loaded that five-million-dollar road-improvement onto me, practically thrown up his hands and put it up to me to save the day. I never knew Tom to be so down. He intimated that just at this time the firm can't survive the tying up of five millions. So, as I say, he's put it up to me."

"He was wise, Adrian."

"Wise!"

Archibald blinked at the man within the cab and shook his head. "I'm afraid," he said, "I am not very good on names and faces."

"Yes, of course, dear, wise," his wife explained. "He has put it up to you, and you will put it over."

"Nancy, do you know anything about the present status of the investment market?"

"I know we can't afford to run our cherished automobile," Nancy laughed. "Yes, dear, I know how bad business is; but I know, too, that you'll win out. Why? Because you are upright and clean and keen and decent. Because you are you, Adrian. Men like you are never beaten. And again, I have the profoundest feeling we have gone ahead in the past three years because it was your due; and I know—I have the inward knowledge—that never will we slip back again, but go on and on ahead."

Adrian Dick threw up his head proudly, his eyes alight.

"That's the talk, Nancy. You're a—a—corker, for sure. Well,"—he stretched his arms above his head,—"you can see, anyway, that I'm in for a stretch of real work, and that all thought of Commencement—"

"Adrian, you are going to Commencement. You didn't take a vacation last year, and this year you haven't had any rest—have worried and have lost what little weight you could spare. You're going to that Reunion Committee meeting tomorrow, and you're going to Commencement, too. Consider it as training for the job you have ahead of you. One can't do big things when body is tired and mind dulled. You needn't shake **your** head; you're going."

"Well,"—Adrian Dick relighted his pipe,—"all right if you say so, dear."

THE meeting of the Twenty-fifth Reunion Committee of Adrian Dick's class was made the occasion of a luncheon by the class president at a club, in New York's financial district, which was so prosperous and powerful that it had an entire building all to itself. Adrian Dick had sufficient temperament and imagination to feel very important as he had made his way among eminent bankers, lawyers, and mercantile and commercial captains to the coat-room. **Downtown** luncheon clubs were by no means within the scope of Adrian's means. The very fact of his presence there had from the first been wholesome to his soul.

Now as he sat behind a long, blunt cigar, puffing leisurely and idly stirring his coffee, the exigencies of business, while they were not out of mind, were not disturbing **him** greatly. Adrian was like that, and his wife, wise woman that she was, had long known it.

"Well, it looks as if everything was settled." Dan Ballard, head of Ballard, Brace and Bowling, glanced about the table. "So far as can be estimated, we're sure of at least a hundred and twenty-five of the class, back, with a lot more probably appearing at the last moment. We've heard from the committees on entertainment, headquarters, band, food—and—and supplies; nothing seems to have been overlooked. Any correction as to that?"

Adrian Dick took his cigar from his mouth and looked at the president.

"All right, Squizzer!" The nickname had been affixed to Adrian in college for some reason long forgotten, and he heard it now only when in company of his classmates. "What's the omission in your eye?"

Squizzer Dick rose and cleared his throat.

"At our first meeting," he said, "some mention was made of a fund, a fund to be devoted to bringing to Commencement those of the class who might be unable to afford the trip. There was, I believe, to be some report on the matter, and—"

The remainder of the sentence was lost in ironical laughter, in the midst of which Squizzer Dick resumed his seat and his cigar.

"I tell you this," asserted Job Hathaway, of the brokerage firm bearing his name, "I'm a candidate for that fund right now."

Josh Sellewe, the Pittsburg steel man, nodded vigorously.

A storm of applications for the benefaction rattled about the table, until Dick Rand, the secretary, rose in response to a nod from Ballard.

"Seriously," he said, "we have searched far and wide, and be-

lieve it or not, we've not been able to find a single member of the class of '98 who is so down and out that lack of money is keeping him away from the reunion. Plenty of other reasons appear, but no one either pleads or intimates poverty."

"Hooray for '98."

Ballard stilled the tumult, frowning.

"The fund exists," he said, "and since it has never been used, it is attaining, so I am informed by the treasurer, sizable proportions. It does seem," he added, "that there must be some one of the class who needs assistance. If so, he cannot be located."

IN the midst of discussion as to some alternative use of the fund, Doc' Sturges, the famous surgeon, sprang to his feet with an exclamation.

"By George, fellows!" he cried. "I have it."

"You have what, Doc'?" Ballard gazed at him curiously.

"I have the very man we're looking for. Do any of you fellows remember a chap named Obergoltz—Jim Obergoltz?"

It was Squizzer Dick who broke the thoughtful silence.

"Yes, I remember him," he said. "In fact, he had the room next to mine in freshman year. He was a regular backwoodsman from somewhere in the Northwest. Left college sometime in spring term. Don't remember why."

In a jiffy Obergoltz and all his peculiarities were clearly recalled by every member of the group. Sure they remembered Jim Obergoltz, his rough clothes, his rougher manners and his shock of hair.

"Well," said Sturges, leaning back with the air of a man who has an interesting story to tell, "I had occasion to go out to Rochester, Minnesota, in my professional capacity, and later hopped to St. Paul to see my sister. One afternoon on a long motor-trip we stopped at a little town, and whom should I see coming up the street in a motorcar that looked like the skeleton of a diplodocus, but Jim Obergoltz. Hadn't changed a bit, except for a lot of deep lines in his face. Hair a little gray perhaps, though you couldn't be certain about that blond thatch. Anyway, I recognized him. I had played on the scrub eleven with him in freshman year—"

"What did he say, Doc'?" Judge Blauvelt leaned forward. "Did you speak to him?"

"Sure. He blinked, took a chew of tobacco, held out his hand and gave me a squeeze that made me think my metacarpals—"

"Talk English, Doc'."

"A squeeze," grinned Sturges, "that nearly crushed my hand. Said he was lumbering and lived in a place called—let me think; it was a queer name. Oh, yes, a place called Thaddeus. Thaddeus, Minnesota. Wire him there, Rand; tell him if he'll come, you'll telegraph the money."

"Of course." Dick Rand frowned ruefully at a printed list of names he had drawn from his pocket. "I can't understand how Obergoltz's name came to be dropped from the class roster. Must have happened before I took the secretary job ten years ago. At all events, I'll wire."

"Hope he comes," grumbled Sellewe, the steel magnate. "I'd love to have some one on hand who is poorer than I am."

It was at this juncture that Squizzer Dick felt it timely to ask a question that he had been primed to ask throughout. He faced the secretary.

"Rand," he said, "have you any way of knowing whether Archibald Pratt is coming on from San Francisco?"

Rand, as some great inward emotion passed through Squizzer, nodded.

"Yes, I meant to mention it. I received a telegram from Pratt this morning saying he was coming East on business and would be able to make this reunion. It'll be his first since I was made secretary."

There was some comment, not all of it complimentary, of which Squizzer heard nothing at all. Surreptitiously he was glancing about the table from one Wall Street man to another until he was satisfied that he knew something not one of them knew.

And what Squizzer knew that the rest did not know was that Archibald Pratt was the lawyer for an estate which after some years he had succeeded in liquidating. Values had run into several millions. All this information Adrian Dick had gleaned from a cutting from a San Francisco daily which had reached him only that morning. That the nature of Pratt's business in the East involved the investment of this money Squizzer had no doubt at all.

"NANCY," Adrian said to his wife that evening as they sat again over their coffee on the side veranda, "you're dead right; things always do work out, if you keep your head up and your brain clear. I wasn't going to Commencement. You said I must go. Then lo and behold, Fate, working in our interest, grabs Baldy Pratt by the trousers and walks him right into my hands."

"Baldy Pratt?" Nancy regarded her husband inquiringly; whereupon Squizzer told her all about Archibald Pratt and the millions he undoubtedly was bringing to the East for investment. "You know," he concluded, "Baldy Pratt was always a big bully in college. He licked me once. I've always carried a grudge about that. But now I wouldn't trade that beating for ten thousand dollars."

Nancy Dick smiled placidly. "It all seems so clear," she said. "But—"

"But?" Dick sat bolt upright in his chair.

"Don't you think, Adrian, it is much easier to work back over the chess-game of Fate and read the moves and the reasons therefor than it is to outline ahead of time the moves that may be made?"

"You mean—" Squizzer stared at his wife.

"I mean, Adrian, the ways of Fate are so devious. I don't want to throw cold water on you, dear. But neither do I want you to be terribly disappointed if nothing comes of this. Perhaps, probably, you wont be. You seem to have such a clear conception. Maybe you have the vision that precedes the miracle—"

Squizzer laughed. "Where's the miracle? Pratt is coming East with a bunch of money to invest. He's coming straight to the college under the pleasantest auspices, straight into the arms of one who has the wherewithal for investment—bonds that are beyond question as to value and stability Miracle! Stuff! It's just a straight open-and-shut business opportunity."

Nancy laughed. "It certainly sounds convincing. And of course you know I want to be convinced, only—"

"Oh, I know. Never mind the qualification. In the bright lexicon, you know—" Squizzer gestured airily. "Leave it to me."

SQUIZZER DICK, who had been back to his college only once since his graduation, walked about the stately campus ostensibly studying the ivy-clad buildings, but in reality preoccupied with his own thoughts. In all the years of his married life, he and Nancy had hitherto been separated only one night, and now the prospect of spending three nights away from home and the woman he loved gave him perspective that was as gloomy as it seemed illimitable. He had left home blithely and casually enough that morning. Now he knew how superficial his mood had been. Certainly he had no business down here at this time—unless, of course, he could crash through on the Archibald Pratt business. Could he? The thing had seemed so simple. But now the proximity of the test, and the exceeding importance attaching to the outcome, filled him with dread. He made his way toward the side-street dwelling which the class had engaged as headquarters.

Several men garbed in the white flannel class suits, with numerals in college colors on the breast pockets, stood on the veranda as Squizzer came up. Only one or two he recognized. With them he exchanged nods and hurried on into the hall where the registry book lay open on a table. A hundred-odd names had been entered, but Pratt's was still missing. Suppose he didn't come at all? Squizzer was about to turn away, when a hand was laid upon his shoulder.

"Hello, Squizzer, you here, eh!"

It was Stanley Allerdyce, of the Wall Street firm of Allerdyce and Company, where Dick had been a poorly paid stock-clerk until Tom Piper had picked him up and given him his chance. Squizzer had not seen Allerdyce, to speak to, since leaving the firm three years before. At that time Dick had addressed him as Mr. Allerdyce—he being the sort of classmate who under the circumstances would demand all the respect a hireling is supposed to owe an employer. Squizzer straightened to his full height—which even so, was not impressive.

"Hello, Fatty," he replied, using Allerdyce's college nickname. "Sure I'm here; why not? Thought you weren't coming."

Allerdyce blinked, and then decided to be graceful.

"Oh, I wasn't. But Archie Pratt wired he was coming, so I decided to run down."

"Oh, Baldy Pratt! I see." Squizzer's underjaw would have fallen had he not caught himself in time. For his remark that he saw, contained significance far greater than the statement seemed to imply. What he really saw was Archibald Pratt as Allerdyce's roommate, the two of them members of an upper-class society so exclusive, so aristocratic, so aloof that proponents of college democracy in Squizzer's day had denounced it as the sum and the source of all undergraduate evils, while others had feared even

Archibald Pratt stood with hands down, staring as Squizzer confronted him. "Defend yourself!" Still the fat hulk made no move; whereupon Squizzer reached out suddenly, seizing Pratt's nose.

to discuss it lest their careers in and out of college be irremediably blighted.

In his canvass of the situation that engrossed him, Squizzer had not forgotten the affiliation of Pratt and Allerdyce with this society—which, as a matter of fact, had fallen into a minor place in the memories even of most of those who had been members. But what he hadn't done had been to connect the two men, not as bosom friends—for neither had the capacity for anything so deep as friendship—but as close companions, birds of a feather, fellow-snobs.

Squizzer's face was brave, but he was sick at heart as he looked at Allerdyce, knowing well that not even memories of past associations would have brought this man here were he not aware that his old companion had millions clamoring for investment.

ALLERDYCE was smiling in a patronizing manner.

"See you are a member of the Reunion Committee, Squizzer. Getting up in the world, eh?"

"Little bit." Squizzer, despite his diffidence and scholastic appearance, had all sorts of nerve. And now he was down to his fighting residuum. His face hardened. If Allerdyce wanted to get hold of Pratt's money, he would have to work for it—hard. Squizzer smiled.

"Let's go back and see what's doing." He led the way out the back-door, where in the yard stood a huge tent with a stage for band and entertainers, and lines of wooden tables and long benches upon which were seated in groups most of the class of '98 who had turned up. Solemnly and with vast suspicion they were quaffing what was reported—to the accompaniment of mysterious head-shakings and winkings—to be the simon-pure article of a more tolerant régime, hidden and steadfastly guarded against this twenty-fifth anniversary. Mugs drummed upon the tables as Allerdyce and Dick appeared.

"Yeaa, Squizzer! How's the barber-shop tenor?"

"Hello there, Fatty, old boy. Waiter, a private table for Mr. Allerdyce."

"Try our beer, now that it's—near."

Jerry Blauvelt, of the New York Supreme Court, advanced to Allerdyce, holding out his hand.

"Stanley, it's good to have you back. Come on over with us. Front table. Fine view of the band. Hear everything."

Allerdyce grinned as he would grin upon a man who sometime might have the duty of aligning himself for or against some legal issue in which the Wall Street man conceivably would find himself involved. Placing an arm over Blauvelt's shoulder, he accompanied him toward the front of the tent. Blauvelt, looking back, nodded to Adrian Dick.

"Come on, Squizzer; you're invited."

But an idea had just entered Squizzer's head. Replacing in his wallet a time-table he had been studying, he gestured negatively.

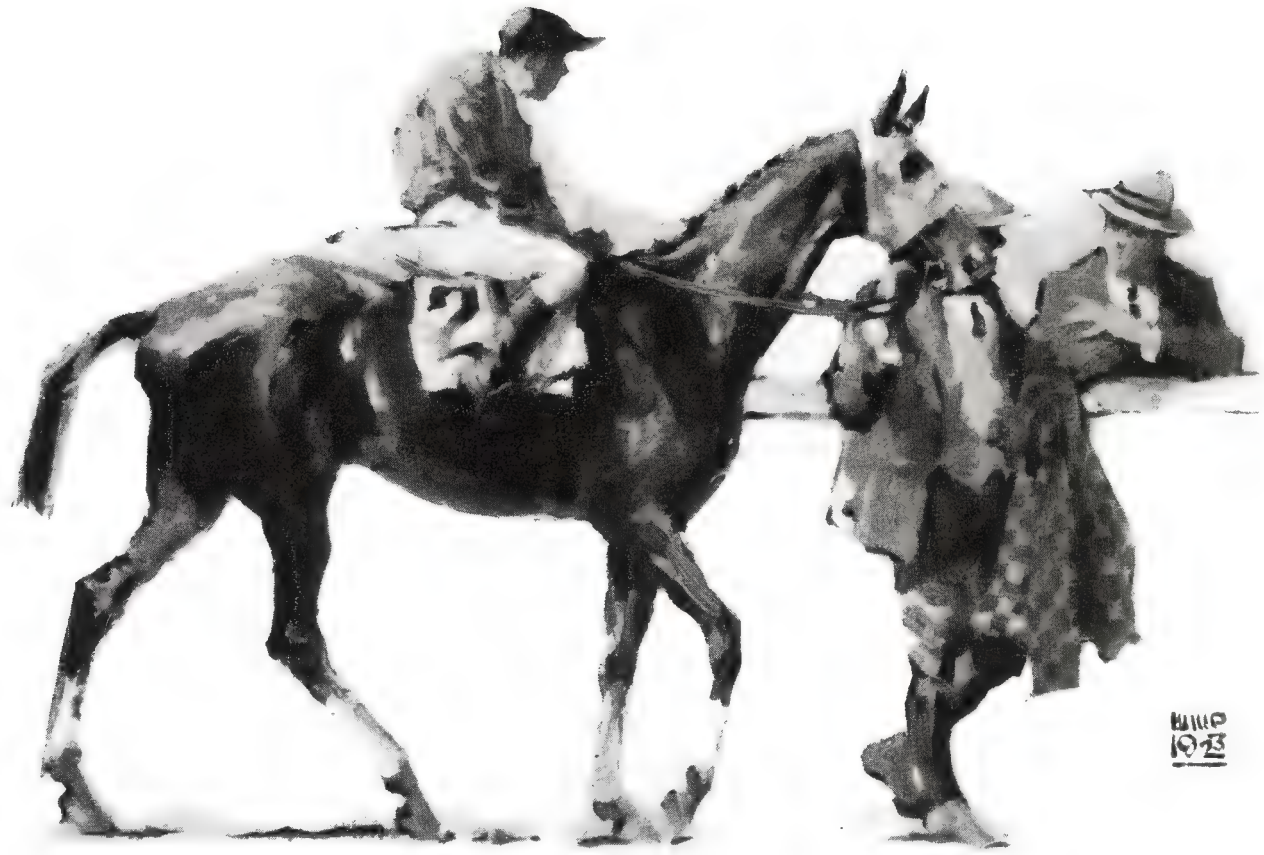
"Thanks, but I've got a date up the street."

"Hooray! Good! A date! Let's escort Squizzer to the fair lady! Order out the band. A pee-rade! Everybody in this!"

In a jiffy Squizzer was seized and deposited in a wheelbarrow, two big men detailed to keep him there. The band sallied forth, followed by Squizzer in the barrow, and then the remainder of the class marching four abreast.

Squizzer was not fussed. He was, on the contrary, radiantly happy. For well he knew that men who are unpopular, or have no engaging personality, are never horsed to any practical extent. Three years ago he had brought himself to the notice of the class—which had forgotten him—by his singing and whimsical humor at a dinner in New York. Now apparently he had become a class figure. How Nancy would laugh when she heard of this episode! And how proud she would be!

Yes, Squizzer was uplifted. But just *(Continued on page 154)*



Jamie was becoming a great rider. "Froggie up!" was now a phrase that influenced the betting ring.

Illustrated by William Meade Prince

The Frog

By GERALD BEAUMONT

IN a little bungalow overlooking a race-track on the Mexican border, the supper dishes had been put away, and Mrs. Monteith was seated at the sewing-machine, working upon a jockey's blouse of green silk set off with gold dots. Jamie, her son, moved to the door, cap in hand.

"Think I'll go out for a little while," said he; "wont be late, but don't wait up for me, Ma."

Mrs. Monteith looked up indulgently.

"Is she a good girl, Jamie?"

"Aw, now listen, Ma—"

"Is she a *good* girl, Jamie?"

"She's been good to me," he evaded. "There aint many that would—"

He hesitated, studying the lining of his cap, as though he had never noticed it before. Mrs. Monteith laid aside her sewing.

"Jamie, you haven't answered my question. Is it because you don't want to lie to me?"

He continued to stand there, head down, plucking at his cap. Suddenly he threw it against the wall, stumbled into a rocking-chair, and burst into sobs.

Mrs. Monteith fingered the blouse with trembling hands.

"Jamie!"

"Don't—don't talk to me!" he wailed. "You don't understand! I tell you, you don't understand! I'm twenty-two years old, and I'm human, even if I am a frog—"

"Jamie!"

"A frog," he shrilled, "a hunchbacked frog! 'Froggie' Monteith—that's my name, aint it? I ride like a frog, I look like a frog, I wear frog colors—"

He pointed a quivering finger at the green blouse.

"Look at that! Green, with yellow spots! Don't you suppose I know how I look, when I'm comin' in? Don't you suppose I hear 'em in the grandstand—'Come on, you Frog! Bring him in, Froggie!'"

Mrs. Monteith turned pale. "But Jamie, lad—have you forgotten how you yourself tried to comfort me when you—you—when it happened? It stopped you from growing, you said, and that's what you were afraid of most. You might not have been able to ride by now, if you hadn't been hurt. You can eat three meals a day, and you don't have to do road-work like the other boys. All the strength has gone into your arms and legs, and there's no better rider on the track. We've been so happy, Jamie; and you've been a good boy always. You mustn't, you mustn't—" She tried desperately to complete the sentence, but the look on his face deterred her. Something had happened to Jamie Monteith. He was no longer her boy.

"You don't understand," he repeated dully. "No mother does! I'm twenty-two, and I got a right to—to—"

He didn't finish.

"I just asked if she was a good girl," Mrs. Monteith reminded gently. "A *good* girl, Jamie—"

And then the storm really broke. Froggie sprang to his feet, and his gray eyes flamed with a light his mother had never seen before.

"Good?" he shouted. "*Good?* There aint a girl living that aint *too good* for me! This one's a queen, and a sport and a lady! And I'm just a crooked little frog—"

"Why, Jamie!"

They're off, and in the grandstand at Tia Juana you watch them swing round the turns and into the stretch—the finish of the greatest race in track history. So vivid does Gerald Beaumont make the scene that you feel yourself right there beside the Dough Girl, cheering for the Frog. A great story!

"A crooked little frog," he reiterated. "Why don't you ask me if *I'm* good? Me, that has to go to jail every day!"

Mrs. Monteith's thin hands fluttered to her throat. "Jail?" she whispered.

"What else? They lock all us jocks up at noon, don't they? They put a snitch amongst us. They got detectives watching us every minute. We dassent talk to nobody; we can't see nobody; we're under lock and key until we're through work for the day. If that aint jail, what do you call it?"

"But Jamie—that's for your own protection—"

"I don't want to be protected," he shouted. "I want a chance to be human—that's all! Exercise horses all morning, locked up all afternoon, home every night—and then the first girl I meet you want to know whether she's *good!* I tell you she's a queen, and a sport, and a lady; and the proof of it is, she kissed me!"

"*Kissed* you?"

"That's what she done! Ten thousand people lookin' on, and she with her diamonds and her fur coat. *She* didn't stop to ask whether *I* was good—she just kissed me! Me—hunchback frog that don't know nothin'. *She* wont mind if I want to hang around! Twenty-two years old, and—I got a right to do that much!"

He picked up his cap, and went once more to the door.

"Never seen me before," he muttered. "Waited until I was let out of jail, and then kissed me just because I brought home a fifteen-to-one shot she backed. The only one on the whole track that ever thought a jock was human. Oh, you don't need to worry, Ma—I aint likely to forget what I am. I just want to look at her—that's all. You don't understand, Ma—you don't under—"

The door closed behind him, shutting off the last syllable. Mrs. Monteith laid her head down against the gaudy blouse, and her shoulders quivered. Jamie a man and twenty-two? Jamie no longer hers? Impossible! Yet here he was, shattering the illusion, wrenching the bandage from his eyes, quivering under the weight of a man's problem. And such a problem!

"Merciful God," sobbed Mrs. Monteith, "don't break my boy's heart as well as his body!"

OUT into the night walked Jamie Monteith, and down to the little Customhouse on the international border. Across the line winked the lights of Mexicana, which is a place that was never established for the benefit of children. But Jamie was now a man, and a beautiful thing had come into his life. A girl had kissed him!

Miss Dolly, who was known across the line as "the Dough Girl" kissed Froggie Monteith for two perfectly good reasons: first, because she felt like it, and secondly, because kisses were her stock in trade. She was an entertainer at Jim Murdoch's El Nacional, and the nicest thing you could have said about her was that she was still pitifully young.

There was a man once; but no—he was not a man! He was a cross between a blackguard and a skunk; and because of him, Miss Dolly was now trying to earn enough commissions at twenty cents a drink to safeguard forever a younger sister who was in the care of the nuns at San Diego. She was very anxious to make all the money she could before she was either shot or stabbed, which was why they called her in Mexicana "the Dough Girl."

But to Jamie Monteith, born on the turf, and educated behind the locked doors of the jockey-room, all women were ladies. That kiss from the overred lips of Miss Dolly was his first experience of the nonmaternal brand, and no knight of old ever accepted the accolade of a lady's favor more reverently.

"A queen and a sport and a lady," he muttered, and alighting from a jitney bus, made his way to the dance-hall that was operated by a man ruled off the American turf. Murdoch stopped him at the entrance.

"Aw, where do you get that stuff?" remonstrated the jockey. "I'm twenty-two, and there's my license to prove it."

Murdoch glanced down at the paper.

"Oh, all right, Froggie! I didn't recognize you. Go on in."

Into the glare of El Nacional stepped Jamie Monteith. It was a cross-section of life such as he had never seen; and its like is no longer to be found on American soil. He knew such things existed, because the boys talked about them in the jockey-room. Nevertheless the actual reality dazed him. It was his first plunge into the turgid waters of life on the border.

Presently he made out the lady who had honored him, and a red flush crept into his cheeks. Fair as she had seemed to him before in her fur coat and with her yellow hair done high, she was infinitely more charming now. For Miss Dolly's corn-colored tresses were braided down her back, and she was in her "working clothes"—a sort of basketball costume with a white middy blouse, dark bloomers and half socks. There were probably fifty girls in the room, garbed in all manner of attire, and dancing with men of every type; but Mrs. Monteith's boy had eyes for only one. He shrank against the wall, hoping to remain unnoticed, and yet tormented by the desire to hear her voice.

"A mile and seventy yards," mused Froggie. "I aint afraid of him. One thousand on his nose!"

Girls of Miss Dolly's type dance with one eye directed at the door. It wasn't a minute before she had wormed her way to his side.

"H'lo, Froggie!" she called. "Spotted you as soon as you came in. First time over the line, aint it?"

He nodded.

"Bet you come for another kiss," laughed Miss Dolly. "Say, I been tellin' all the girls about the way you saved our money. Oh, boy, that was some ride! I could just love you to death! Let's go hunt up a table, and I'll treat."

"No, no," he stammered. "I don't let no lady pay for me. I got some dough, Miss Dolly, honest I have. You musn't think I'm a kid buttinsky. I'm twenty-two, Miss Dolly, and—and—"

"Forget it," she admonished, and almost before he knew it, they were sitting at a table, and the Dough Girl was counting out blue checks to the waiter, and saying:

"Open up, Froggie. Just bustin' to tell me the story of your life, aint you? Well, shoot, kid. Sister's strong for you!"

That was a wonderful feast for the starved soul of the Frog. A tinseled Venus; Bacchus, bleary-eyed and stale of breath;

Orpheus, sweating over his trombone in a frontier "palace" with a sawdust floor! What did it matter? Jamie the Frog was baring his soul to Dolly the Dough Girl.

Once he caught Murdoch looking in their direction, and he half arose.

"Never mind him," said Miss Dolly. "Go on and talk!"

Froggie hesitated, his eyes directed dubiously at the glass which the girl was fingering. She read his thoughts.

"It's only water. Think us girls could drink real gin and keep our value to the house? The saps get their poison and pay for our water at a dollar a throw. You were saying—"

Froggie was saying everything, telling her even about his mother. He stopped in the middle of a sentence, his eyes caught by the brilliance of the diamonds on her fingers.

"Paste," said Miss Dolly, briefly. "What was it your mother said when you told her—but never mind! Whatever she said was right, Froggie. You aint got any business over here. You're a sweet kid—"

Froggie looked at her so strangely that Miss Dolly's lips quivered.

"I'm twenty-two," he faltered. "All the jocks have got friends except me. Wont you just—just let me—hang around? Miss Dolly, you're the first lady I ever met—and I wont bother you—"

The Dough Girl toyed with her glass.

The farther down the scale a woman drops, the more she hungers for the feminine right to be worshiped. It is the spark of femininity that all the mud in the world can never obliterate. Trampled under foot, a girl may sell her soul to the highest bidder, but she *gives* her heart, and always to some one weaker than herself, even if it is only a little hunchbacked *frog*.

"Monday is Mexican Sunday on the border," Miss Dolly observed. "No races, and there's nothing doing over here. Suppose we go to the park in San Diego, and spend the day? I'll bring a lunch, and some stale bread so we can feed the pigeons—"

A slow flush spread over Jamie Monteith's pale cheeks.

"You're kiddin', Miss Dolly! I aint got any dude clothes; you'd be ashamed—"

"Sweater and cap," said the Dough Girl. "I'll wear this blouse and a skirt. We should worry!"

The Frog looked at her out of large eyes.

"It's—it's a go!" he stammered. "A queen and a sport and a lady—that's what you are! A queen and a—"

"That'll do," said Miss Dolly, getting up. "Go on home now, Froggie. I've got to make up for lost time."

Mrs. Monteith's boy went happily home to his mother, entirely unaware that his visit had been of interest to more than one person.

The proprietor of El Nacional, barred from every American course as a crook, and now operating in the shadow of a track on Mexican soil, viewed the retreating form of the little hunchback appraisingly. A girl and a jockey—interesting combination to a man of Murdoch's type, especially when he figured that he owned the girl.

LIFE runs swiftly in the sporting world, where love, hate and passion are unbridled forces. Undying enmities, eternal friendships are formed—not in years or months or days, but in ten minutes. A man risks his fortune on a half-mile sprint that is over in forty-eight seconds. A woman may emerge from hell and fly to the celestial gates during the time she is tossing a piece of stale bread to a pigeon.

It was not "Miss Dolly the Dough Girl" nor "Froggie the Hunchback" who thereafter on Mexican Sundays reveled in the pure sunshine of Balboa Park, who laughed gleefully at the antics of greedy pigeons, or perhaps sat spellbound listening to the deep-throated organ in the public amphitheater.

It was just a boy and a girl playing at the time-old game of happiness, reveling in the few hours of freedom from the prison of their daily existence. During such times Jamie forgot his injured body, and Miss Dolly reclaimed her bartered soul.

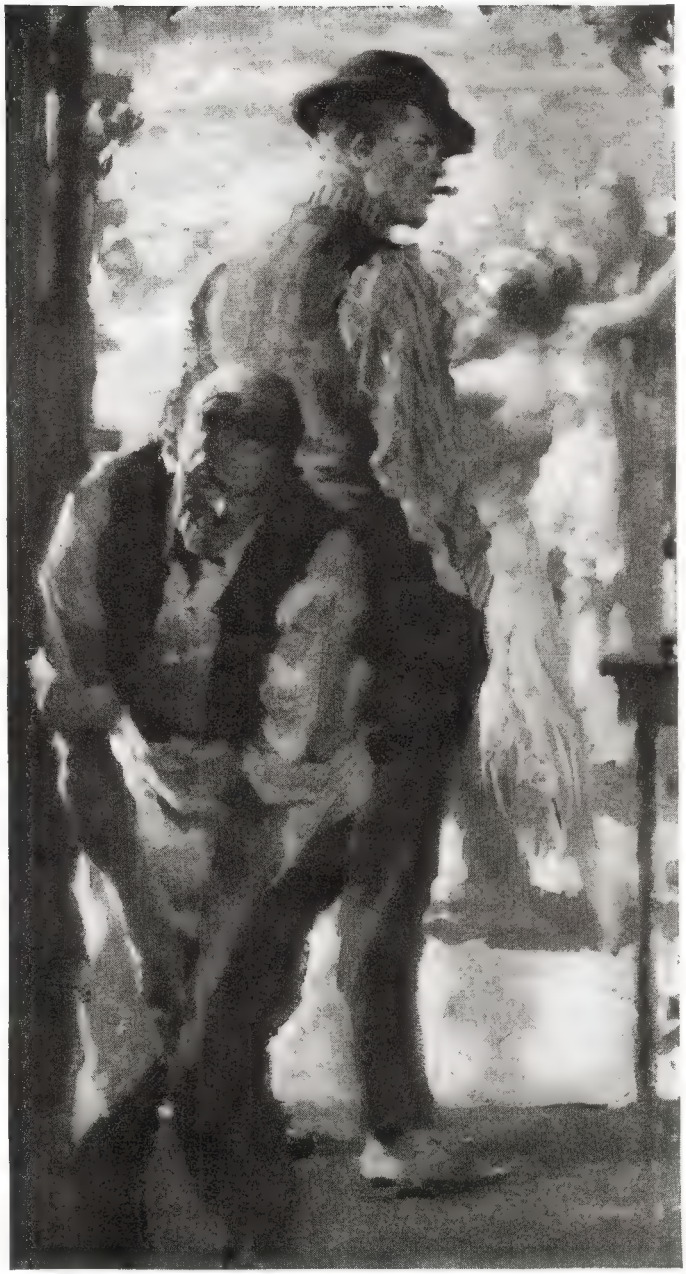
Whatever bond remained to remind the boy of other things was severed with the passing of the gentle Mrs. Monteith. Jamie, returning from the track one afternoon, found his mother bent over the sewing-machine, her face gray and her lips moving convulsively. She was subject to heart-attacks, but this was worse than any he had ever seen before. He rushed out to summon a doctor, and for an hour afterward knelt by his mother's bedside, contrite and fear-stricken. The physician applied stimulants, but Mrs. Monteith was aware that her hour had come. Never had she asked her son for the name of the woman who had kissed him, never a word after that first night. But now, with weak fingers caressing his hair, she whispered the last plea of a maternal heart.

"A good girl, Jamie—a *good* girl!"

He looked her squarely in the face.

"A queen, and a sport, and a lady, Ma!"

Mrs. Monteith smiled contentedly, and was still.



ROUSED into heroism by the magic leaven of a girl's kiss, Jamie Monteith was becoming a great rider. His name was on the lips of everyone. "Froggie up!" was now a phrase that influenced the betting ring. The very accident that denied him the appearance of manhood was now his greatest asset. He was twenty-two and could ride at a hundred and five pounds. His strength was in his arms and legs, where a jockey needs it most. Not a boy on the track could make him draw whip; and that, mark you, is the greatest compliment you can pay a jockey.

A "Garrison finish," with a boy swinging his whip in a circle as fast as he can ply the leather, drives the crowd to frenzy—but the real star is the lad who can get the last ounce out of his horse, and keep both hands on the reins.

The temptation of every jockey when he is only fifty yards from the wire and being pressed hard, is "to go the whip." Nine times out of ten it costs him the race. The laboring horse swerves under the punishment; his head is being held up by only one hand instead of two; his rider's body is off balance. Equine intelligence rebels.

It was different with Froggie Monteith. All the sweetness of his nature that had welled to the surface in response to Miss Dolly's encouragement found expression when he was lifted to the back of a horse at the shrill command of the paddock bell.

Once he caught Murdock looking in their direction, and he half arose. "Never mind him," said Miss Dolly. "Go on and talk."

If all women were ladies in Jamie Monteith's eyes, so all hórses became thoroughbreds, and they responded to him in much the same manner as the Dough Girl. The most sullen selling-plater in old man Hagen's barn ran like a real horse when Froggie was in the saddle.

He was always pale and shaken when he cantered back to the winner's circle and lifted his whip to the judges for permission to dismount. But with every victory, his hope grew greater, and the plan that was forming in his mind took on a more definite aspect.

Money was what he wanted, money to purchase his liberty from old man Hagen,—who held a three-year contract on his services at an apprentice salary,—a home with roses on the porch, and freedom to ride for whom he pleased on the great race-tracks of the world, with Miss Dolly always in the grandstand. The season was drawing to a close, and soon he would be ordered north or south, east or west, wherever his owner elected.

Jamie Monteith, however, had other plans: *"The Frog he would a-wooing go!"*

Never had he asked Miss Dolly for another kiss; never in their innocent litany of Mexican Sundays had a word passed between them in the language of lovers. The Dough Girl did not attempt to analyze their relations. She knew only that she was paying a penalty six days in the week for the privilege of being happy on the seventh. She too wanted money, for her earnings were small; the bets that she could afford to risk on Froggie's mounts were few and far between. She had no dreams, no illusions. Death awaited her right around the bend, and she would go forward to meet the specter halfway, just as soon as she figured that the stake she was amassing for her younger sister was sufficiently large.

Unpainted, quietly attired, Miss Dolly went out with Jockey Monteith, sometimes to the Theosophical Gardens at Point Loma, sometimes to the white beach at Coronado, where they could sprawl on the sand and look off at the blue line of the horizon.

Froggie invested in a camera, and they posed for each other, inducing a kind old gentleman to hold the camera once so that they could be taken together. This picture was the star of Froggie's collection. He pinned it on the wall of the "tackle-room," in which he slept, and spent hours in the consideration of it, reasoning that if he had worn a hat instead of a cap, it would have made him look *almost* as tall as Miss Dolly.

To his photographic gallery he confided his hopes and aspirations; his language to those pictures was very brave. Miss Dolly in the flesh was quite a different matter. When she seemed tired and depressed, his spirits ascended, but when she was merry and light-hearted, he grew pale and thoughtful. Nighttimes, by the light of a coal-oil lamp, he gloated like a miser over the constantly increasing figures in his bank-book. If he could talk his owner into sending him to the post for the Closing Day Handicap on the back of Alan-a-Dale, the thing could be accomplished. Hagen would take ten thousand for his contract. Froggie had nearly seven thousand. Alan-a-Dale, huge, awkward, man-killing Alan-a-Dale, would be as good as ten-to-one in the betting.

"A mile and seventy yards," mused Froggie. "We'd be outfooted most of the way, but we'd sure be comin' at the end. Boy, oh boy, we—would—be—comin'! I aint afraid of him! One thousand on his nose, and Miss Dolly to root for me. I gotta lot of nerve, at that, but I'd ask her. I'd ask her! She couldn't do no more than say no, and they can't rule a guy off for *tryin'!*"

The betting public was now following Froggie Monteith, and by the same token the little hunchback was beginning to experience the pressure that every premier jockey must learn to withstand. He wanted money; it was offered to him in a hundred ways. He thirsted for things he had always been deprived of; thin-lipped men were eager to supply them. Sirens smiled on him; strangers flattered him. In the secrecy of the jockey-room

certain things were made plain that he had never fully understood. They knew he was no "snitch," and so combinations were formed and names were mentioned in his presence. He was told he could either listen to reason or take the consequences.

"You aint talkin' to me," was his only answer.

Old man Hagen didn't want to let Froggie go to the post in the Closing Day Handicap on the back of Alan-a-Dale, an equine colossus, with mean eyes and the nervous ears of a jack rabbit.

"Aint a jock on the track can handle him now, son. He's gone crazy."

But Froggie breezed the horse a mile for three mornings in succession without mishap, and pleaded his case so eloquently that Hagen finally yielded.

"Well, all right, we'll start him. But you're taking a big chance, kid. He knows the difference between a workout and a race. If there's any kind of a delay at the post, with a dozen horses squeezing and milling all around him, I wont be responsible for what happens."

"I aint afraid," said Froggie, and hastened off to the telephone to apprise Miss Dolly of his good luck, and remind her that the next day was Mexican Sunday.

As if the Dough Girl could forget it! Their last Monday together! The season would close on the following Saturday, and Jockey Monteith was due to follow the thoroughbreds wherever the bugle summoned. Miss Dolly steeled herself, tucked the usual lunch under her arm, and came smiling to meet Jamie for the final outing. They greeted each other in their favorite rendezvous, the "square of the pigeons" at the exposition grounds in Balboa Park. Later they spread their repast under the shade of a big palm, and then became strangely silent. The Dough Girl plucked at blades of grass, slowly at first, then faster and faster. Looking up, Froggie saw that she was crying.

"Why, Miss Dolly—"

"It's n-nothing," whimpered the girl, "only I'm just scared, just scared to death. Froggie, you musn't ride Alan-a-Dale. Promise me you wont ride him!"

"Why, Miss Dolly," he protested, "that's the one thing I've been counting on most. I got a thousand dollars on him at ten-to-one—got a fellow to wire it for me to a Chicago pool-room last night. He'll be five-to-one at the track, and he's got a swell chance. I aint afraid of him, Miss Dolly."

The Dough Girl bit her lips.

"It aint the horse alone, Froggie; it's—it's something else I'm scared of, something I've been trying to keep from you. Don't ride, Froggie—not in that race. There's things going on that you don't know nothin' about."

The hunchback's eyes widened. Suddenly he divined the truth.

"Gee, Miss Dolly—have they been botherin' you? Oh, my God, of course they have! I turned 'em down, and the damn crooks have been houndin' a lady! What they been doin' to you, Miss Dolly?"

FOR answer she thrust a hand into her blouse, and produced a number of bookmakers' tickets, spreading them before her on the grass. She tried to laugh, but made a sorry job of it.

"Here, Froggie—you'll get a kick out of this. It's been going on for a month. Murdoch's been slipping me these tickets out of the kindness of his heart. Did you know, Froggie, that you beat me out of five thousand bucks?"

"Me?" gasped the Frog, and bent over the pasteboards.

The tickets were all on horses which he remembered having beaten out in the closest of finishes. He stared, white-faced, at Miss Dolly.

"Murdoch thought, of course, I'd show 'em to you before each race," explained the Dough Girl. "He figured you wouldn't ride quite so hard, if you knew what it was costing me. We could have made quite a clean-up, Froggie. All we had to do was to name our price."

"And you never said a word! You just went on rootin' for me?"

Suddenly he directed a trembling finger at the girl's throat.

"Them marks! They're *finger-prints!* Don't tell me somebody aint been chokin' you! Murdoch done it! You wouldn't come through, and he beat you! My God, you a queen, and a sport, and—"

"Shut up!" cried Miss Dolly fiercely. "Shut up, you little fool! Oh, forgive me, Froggie—I didn't mean it! I quit my job this morning, and I guess—I guess— Well, never mind, kid—it's all right, only I don't want anything to happen to you. Don't give 'em a chance, Froggie—please don't ride Alan-a-Dale. Murdoch has bought that race, and if he can't control you, he wont stop at anything."

But the very fact that she had gone through all this in his behalf, merely glorified the opportunity that lay before him. For half an hour he pleaded the case of the huge chestnut stallion. He told her how he planned to keep on the outside of the field where there was no chance of any boy jamming him in a pocket or riding him over the rail. He even went so far as to confide his hope of securing freedom to become a free-lance jockey, riding for millionaire owners in the East and in Europe. As to her part in this dream, he still held his peace. That would come after the race, when he could stand before her, flushed, triumphant and the ruler of his own destiny.

The eloquence of innocent love and faith prevailed. Miss Dolly found her arguments answered, her entreaties overruled. She promised to root for Alan-a-Dale, and above all else to pray that Marse Kennedy, the starter, would not hold them at the post too long.

This much settled, the Dough Girl had one last message to impart, and for her, it was the hardest of all. She dried her eyes and smiled at her companion.

"I'm a nut, Froggie, makin' a scene on our get-away-day, just when we ought to be havin' a good time. I only got one thing to say, kid—and I should have said it a long time ago, only I—couldn't. You're too sweet a kid to be wasting your time or runnin' around loose. Promise your pal that you'll marry a good—a *good* girl!"

Froggie colored and looked away.

"I'm going to," he mumbled, "I'm going to try—"

The Dough Girl sat there a moment. Then, laughing a little wildly, she sprang up.

"Well, come on," she called. "Let's go down and give those darn pigeons a final blow-out!"

THE Closing Day Handicap drew to the track a crowd of thirty thousand people, among them Miss Dolly, who had given her paste diamonds that morning to a girl friend, and had willed her fur coat to another. The cheap little vanity case which she swung gayly in one hand held a ten-dollar bill and a tiny vial of potassium cyanide—Miss Dolly's best bet of the day. She really didn't know what she was going to do with the ten dollars until she ran across "Rootin' John," who made his livelihood by rooting for any horse you liked.

"I got three prices, lady," John explained. "For two-bits I supply just an ordinary root; for half a dollar, I yell pretty hard; but for six-bits I put on the whole show. What horse is it?"

"Alan-a-Dale," said Miss Dolly.

John's countenance fell.

"That hound? Make it Kenwood, lady; there's the good thing of the day. Played so hard in every pool-room of the country that they've been telegraphing in to the track, trying to lay off the bets. Alan-a-Dale aint got no chance, lady; this is the biggest killin' of the season. Grab a Kenwood ticket before it's too late. Honest, I couldn't root for Alan-a-Dale. That horse come near killin' himself a few minutes ago in the paddock. He's crazy."

"Ten dollars," said Miss Dolly. "Five if you root for Alan-a-Dale, five more if you bring him home." She twirled the bill under his nose.

Rootin' John was dazed—for just a moment. Then off came his coat and vest, and his fingers tore away his collar.

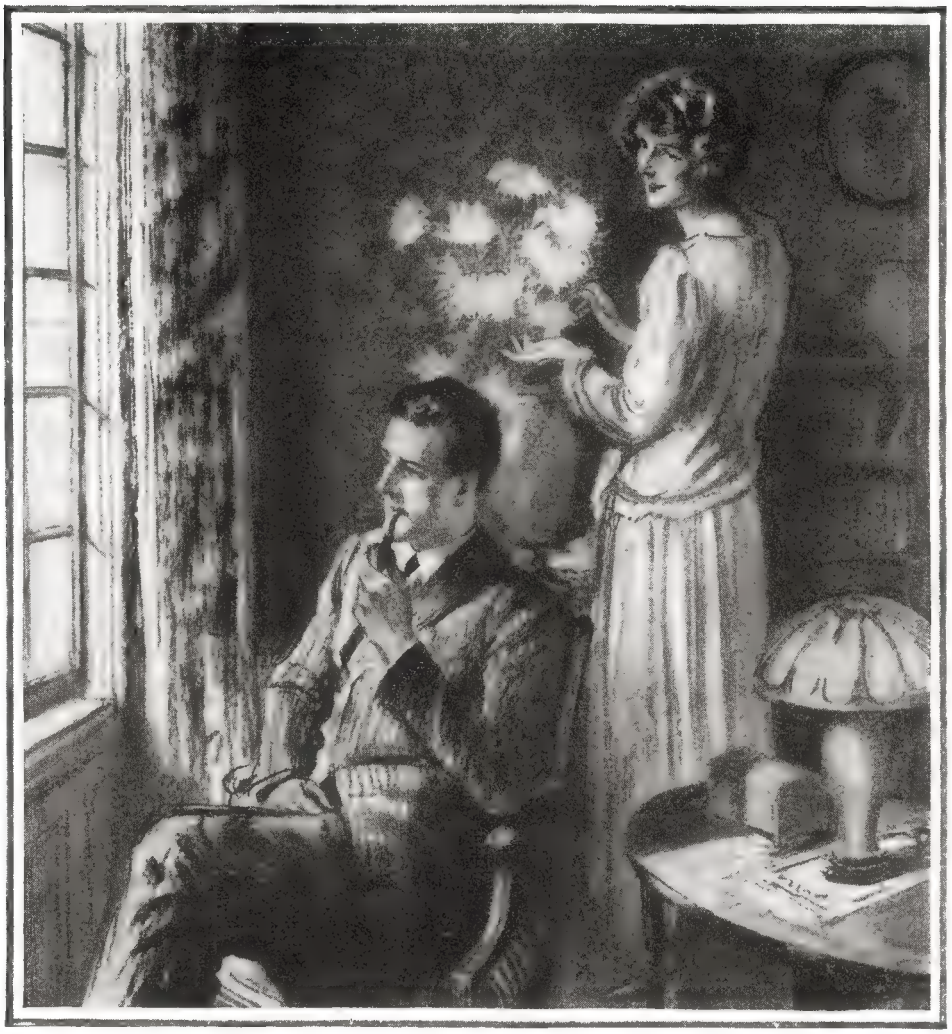
"Lady, for ten dollars I could bring him in backward! Alan-a-Dale, huh? Get out of my way, everybody! I'm going to run back and forth on these steps, and when I get started, I'm crazy as hell! Any preliminaries, lady? How do you want him to get off? What kind of start?"

"A quick break, John—pull for a quick break!"

"Quick she is, lady! If that starter goes to sleep, I'll spring the barrier myself! They're comin' out now. Alan-a-Dale last and on the outside, aint he? All right, here I go!" And Rootin' John's voice blasted the heavens.

By all the freaks of fortune, it *was a walking start,* that prettiest and rarest of all sights on a race-track. Thirty yards from the barrier the last horse wheeled into position, and on they came, tiptoeing slowly forward, ten thoroughbreds in a trembling line, every jockey with his eyes on the starter. Twenty yards from the tape, and the dancing wall of color still quivered in perfect alignment. Kenwood Lad had the pole; Alan-a-Dale was on the outside. The big chestnut's body was white with lather. His legs were bandaged, his head covered by a hood with red blinkers. How any boy could hold that trembling dynamo in place was more than anyone could *(Continued on page 111)*

From the steerage to a place among the social elect: that had been the career of Mary Ryan, heroine of the strongest novel yet written by the author of "Mamselle Chérie." Now, however, Mary finds new perils beset her at the pinnacle of her achievements.



"You are mistaken, Mary," he said. "Mrs. Despard and I are very good friends. She has been very kind. I esteem her highly. I hope you understand."

Fires of Ambition

Written and Illustrated by GEORGE GIBBS

The Story So Far:

IT was as a child in the steerage that Mary Ryan had come to America, and she had grown up in a poverty-stricken household; but she had a bountiful dower of beauty and of intelligence, and she was determined to win better—far better—things for herself. Somehow she managed a course in business college; and this enabled her to obtain a position as stenographer with the Hygrade Company, dealers in women's dresses.

Mary prospered with the Hygrade; she took advantage of the employees' discount to buy one of their dresses; and when the president Mr. Wittmaier and the head salesman Al Crawley saw how well she wore it, a chance for quicker achievement—at greater risk—was offered her. She was asked to help Crawley sell the Hygrade dresses. She consented—and succeeded, remarkably. Both Lucille Dunois and "Madame Denise" (who was in reality a man named Alan Wetherby) agreed to put a Hygrade dress in stock; and Mary's value to her employers was now unquestioned.

Presently, however, Mary found her position at the Hygrade too difficult. Crawley made crude advances, and Wittmaier expected her to entertain out-of-town buyers, men who felt themselves privileged to make love to her. In desperation she went to Alan Wetherby,—"Madame Denise,"—asked for a position—and got it.

Mary's duties with Wetherby were manifold—bookkeeper, dress model, assistant saleswoman; and in all of them she was successful. And here, as at the Hygrade, she had need of intelligence to avoid the difficulties her beauty provoked. Reginald Cheever, a wealthy young man of high social standing, came into the shop with Mrs. Despard, and was much taken with Mary. Thereafter he paid open court to her, and Mrs. Despard was not at all pleased—though her husband was.

Mary coolly "used" Cheever to advance her social status, and when he tried to capture her by storm, checked him by the simple expedient of jabbing a pin into him. Yet he forgave her for this, and at her request introduced her to Mrs. Vanderhorst, a society woman who was also a successful portrait painter. Mrs. Vanderhorst, eager for so beautiful a subject, "took her up." And it was at Mrs. Vanderhorst's that Mary met Bart Savage, a powerful railroad official, destined to be an important factor in her career. Meanwhile, Mary kept the interest of her old flame Joe Bass, who now had a promising place in a law-office. Meanwhile, too, her position with Wetherby improved; and he took her with him on a buying trip to Paris.

During Mary's absence Destiny took Joe Bass in hand. A clever and courageous piece of work for his law-firm during his superiors' absence won him their high regard, and he was

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invited to the home of his chief, Mr. Simpson, and came on friendly terms with the daughter, Fanny Simpson—with whom Joe's Virginia friend Martin Daingerfield was in love.

Joe's professional success, too, brought him another strange experience. He was assigned to do a bit of legal work for the firm's client Mrs. Despard, and that unhappily married lady cultivated Joe eagerly—on one moonlit occasion, to the danger point. . . . .

Mary returned from Europe. Barton Savage had followed her thither, and soon after her return she found tongues wagging. To silence them, she demanded of Savage that he cause his wife to invite her to her box at the opera. *(The story continues in detail:)*

THOUGH Mary's future had for a long while been assured, and her salary, begun so modestly, had now reached generous proportions in three figures every week, she had made no change in the small apartment she occupied. And now she was going to make much more money—enough, indeed, for commodious quarters in one of the larger apartment-hotels on an important street, where she could modestly entertain at tea and dinner—enough, too, to keep a car and a chauffeur, if she chose. But she wisely decided that at this time it was better to avoid any queries as to her income which her removal to a larger place might suggest, for she had already learned that gossip was ever ready to question the resources of the working woman who lived alone.

And so she put the money that she did not use into a bank—a considerable sum each week, with every prospect of further increases in the near future. She knew, as others in the shop knew, that this holiday of Alan Wetherby's was the indication of the desire, recently expressed, to retire from active business altogether. Mary had won her place by her initiative, imagination, skill and industry—aided by her beauty; and in spite of the longer service of Mrs. Levitt, Miss Barnes and Miss Benner in Wetherby's employ, none of them was qualified, as Mary was, to conduct the business successfully. Each was a specialist; each had her limitations, and each was aware of them. If there were heartburnings, Wetherby had already assuaged them by increases in salary, and Mary's first step in Wetherby's absence was to add another amount to their earnings. The business of the season fully warranted this expenditure, as well as Mary's commensurate increase for herself, for the books of Madame Denise already showed a profit of many thousands of dollars over the same months of last year.

Most, or many of these things she told Joe Bass as they sat at luncheon in her small dining-room one Sunday, shortly after Alan Wetherby had left for his "holiday." She had not seen a great deal of Joe since her return to America in the fall, though Joe, in spite of a tremendous press of business, had placed himself more than once at her disposal. He had met her, of course, at the steamer, and waited patiently outside the railing while Mr. Barton Savage had expedited the business of the Customs officers as to the personal luggage of the party.

Joe hadn't been pleased at the attentions of Mary's traveling companion, and showed his disapproval so plainly that he rather cast a damper upon the joyful arrival. They had quarreled over that the next evening, and in the reconciliation that followed, Joe Bass had proposed marriage to Mary again. It was very sweet of him. It was always sweet of him. But in the full flush of her fashionable venture, Mary discovered no time for sentiment. She had refused him gently, and Joe had gone his way, a little sadder, perhaps a little wiser, sure that Martin Daingerfield had been right when he had spoken of the reactions of business upon the spiritual qualities of women who worked for a living.

He had taken his medicine like a man and gone about his work with a new vigor, withdrawing from her nothing of his good will. They had gone once or twice to the theater, and once they had taken a walk in the Park, but the subject of marriage had been taboo. She was intensely interested in his progress, and he was in hers, but it did not take him long to discover that Mary's idle moments, which were few, were given to people Joe hadn't the pleasure of knowing, and that in the social sense, she was getting quite out of his class.

Two things had turned Mary's thoughts again to Joe and brought him the invitation to luncheon at her apartment. The first was a story that she had heard from Wilkes Harbison, the artist, of Gertrude Despard's apparent infatuation for her young counsel in the lawsuit. And the other was the sudden defection of Bart Savage, which by some curious quirk of sensibility had set Mary to thinking of Joe's criticism of her conduct in permitting with such indifference to appearances the attentions of a married man.

This thought of Joe was an unconscious reversion to their ancient relationship. She had always liked to have Joe angry with her when she knew that she was in the wrong.

As to Gertrude Despard—Mary's lips drew together in the thin line with which Joe Bass was familiar, the ominous sign of some inward and sinister commotion. Though at this moment Mary did not want Joe Bass for herself, she did not relish the thought of his attentions to another woman—a woman of the social group to which she aspired—Gertrude Despard!

So they sat in the small dining-room of Mary's apartment, their luncheon finished—an admirable luncheon, by the way, served by a trim maid in black and white. For though she had no passion for rich foods and highly seasoned sauces, Mary had learned much of such things. Joe Bass, smoking his pipe by the window at her request, was quite unaware of the incentive to these marks of her sudden consideration. She took a cigarette from a box on the mantel and joined him—the fashionable vice; and to tell the truth, in Mary's case merely the toy of expediency.

Bart spoke quite frankly of some amusing incident that had happened in Paris. Mrs. Savage, as though she realized that something was required of her, smiled delicately upon them both.

"Tell me, Joe," she said as she sat near him, "something more about your law-affairs. You said the firm had given you a big case to handle—something to do with the Despards, isn't it?"

"Yes," he replied innocently, "—Mrs. Despard, that is. It's her money, you know, the James Taylor money, that is involved. There's a fellow named Horner, who claims to have made a contract with old Taylor—"

"You've known Mrs. Despard very well, then?" she broke in carelessly.

"Of course. She's Taylor's daughter and my client. All the money is hers, so it's really a suit against Mrs. Despard that I'm defending. It looked at first as though this man Horner had something back of his claim to build a case on, and it meant, you see, the controlling interest—"

"She's a very clever woman, isn't she?" asked Mary.

"Er—yes. Very clever, very cordial."

"They say the place at Newport is rather magnificent," she suggested.

"Oh, yes. White marble columns, tessellated floors, tapestries, fellows in yellow vests and knee breeches hanging around. Beautiful grounds, cliffs overlooking the sea—"

"And a moon?" asked Mary. "Of course there was a moon."

Joe Bass frowned and gave Mary a glance. "A moon?" he muttered, frowning. "What on earth—" He paused uncertainly, and then, "Oh, nonsense!" he sputtered.

"But why should you be so disturbed, Joe dear?" she asked sweetly. "Moons aren't unusual in Newport, are they? I'm sure now that you made love to her — and by moonlight."

"I didn't," he said indignantly.

She was laughing now, softly malicious.

"I didn't make love to her," he repeated. "I was there on business. You don't have to make love to every woman who happens to be your client."

"Why not? She's extremely handsome, and—er—shall I say—fancy free?"

"Oh, rubbish! I wish you'd change the subject."

"Or if you didn't make love to her, Joe dear, perhaps it was *she* who made love to you!"

"She didn't," he lied indignantly. "You haven't any right to talk in that way about a client of mine."

But she only laughed again.

"Lothario!" she said, gurgling gently.

"Oh, say, Mary! I've had about enough of this."

"Don Juan! Joe dear, you do improve with age. I never would have thought—"

"Oh, shut up, will you?" he demanded irritably.

"No," she said calmly. "I wont. I only began in fun, but now I'm quite convinced that I'm right. I think I'm just a little jealous, Joe—a little hurt. You know you never made love to *me* by moonlight."

"I didn't make love to *her*," he muttered sullenly.

"Then why is she so crazy about you?" she asked.

He looked up at her quickly.

"Crazy! About me? Who has been telling you this rotten stuff?"

"Never mind," she returned with a knowing air, and laughed again. "I never would have thought it of you, Joe. Indeed, I wouldn't."

He knew now that she wanted him to betray himself and refused to get angry. Instead of showing temper, he grew quite calm.

"You are mistaken, Mary," he said, puffing at his pipe and looking out of the window. "Mrs. Despard and I are very good friends. She has been very kind. I esteem her highly. I hope you understand."

She chose another tack.

"It's really very noble of you, Joe. Of course you *would* defend a woman's good name."

But he was on his guard now, and only smiled, though he felt like throwing something at her.

"After all, Mary dear," said Ruth, "Bart is their man, not yours." "Mrs. Savage hasn't been very nice to me," said Mary, "but I—I'm not in love with Bart Savage."

"I'm not aware that she needs defending."

His coolness angered her. "You must think I'm a fool," she observed. "A woman like that—Reggie Cheever's—"

"Oh, do let up, Mary. That's none of your business or mine—"

"You defend her!"

He felt that she had gone too far; and her anger—as it often did—struck fire to his.

"From malicious gossip," he returned evenly. "Gossip that strikes from the shadow—the same kind of gossip that's been striking at you."

"At me!"

"Yes—you and Mr. Savage."

"Oh. You've heard that? From whom? Gertrude Despard?"

"I've heard it."

"Cat!"

He shrugged and rose, knocking out his pipe on the fender. "You needn't blame Mrs. Despard. I've heard it from others."

"Oh, you're odious!"

He took a pace across the room and turned. She was sitting, gazing into the small fireplace, rigid with antipathy—perhaps as much to Joe as to the things that he had said.

"See here, Mary: I didn't come here to quarrel again. We've been over this Savage business before. I warned you what would happen."

"And you listened while that woman reviled me?"

"No. Mrs. Despard did not revile you. If she had reviled you, I would have known what to say. No one reviled you. You can put your finger on revilings. You can give them the lie. But gossip is more insidious, more difficult to answer, to controvert—gossip like this you say you've heard about me. Just two names linked—a smirk, a shrug, a sneer; and a good name goes down. Mrs. Despard's—yours—mine—"

She rose and crossed to the window, raging inwardly for a moment. Then she burst forth:

"Oh! I'm sick of your reproaches, Joe Bass. I'll go with whom I please, when I please. I'll give you something to talk about. I will!"

"Mary, don't be a fool!"

"You'd better go. I don't want to talk to you any more—ever!"

He looked at her for a moment steadily, but she refused to turn her head. So he went slowly out of the room.

The gossip about her had come unpleasantly from the lips of Joe Bass, who had warned her of the dangers of her intimacy with a married man. She was angry with Joe, with the Despard woman, with herself. Her mild inquisition of her guest, which had promised amusement, had proven a boomerang. It infuriated her that Joe should have defended Mrs. Despard, though what she could have expected of him, under any circumstances, she didn't quite know. It seemed that he had confirmed the gossip that she had heard, rather than refuted it, and yet somehow such an affair was impossible to consider. Joe and Mrs. Despard—incredible!

Moreover Mary wanted to punish Joe in some way for daring to speak of Mr. Savage—just at the moment when she and Bart. . . . . She would give them all something to gossip about. A note to Mr. Savage's office would bring him flying northward, or a phone call. . . . . That was it. She turned from the window and went into the hallway for the phone-book. But after a moment, she put it down, thinking. And from her own viewpoint it was well that she did so. For the next day she received a note. It was of fine linen, in a square envelope, and bore on its flap a crest. She tore it open hurriedly.

"My dear Miss Ryan," she read. "Wont you dine with us on Wednesday night at seven and afterward go with us to the opera? It is to be 'Aïda,' with Caruso, and I'm sure you will enjoy it. —Most cordially yours, Lillian Savage."

Mary Ryan turned to the window, her lips pressed close together, only their corners mobile. And a little frosty spark danced in her eyes—danced, died, then danced again.

Joe Bass was forgotten.

Chapter Eighteen

MARTIN DAINGERFIELD was not accustomed to the opera, but he had a taste for music. And so when Fanny Simpson invited him to go with her to hear "Aïda," he accepted with alacrity. He would have done much more than this for Fanny. If she had asked him, he would even have gone to a program of music by Richard Strauss or Debussy. Besides, Caruso was to sing, and Martin had never heard him. They arrived early, and Martin followed Fanny to seats which the Simpson family had owned for many years, in an excellent location, commanding a view both of the stage and of the audience. Seen at such close

range, it was all very interesting to Martin—the women, with bare shoulders draped with jewels, their astonishing Kaffir-like headdresses of feathers and ribbons, the stout, the lean, the ugly, the fair, all vying for an accent of distinctiveness if not of distinction; the men in their black and white, plethoric and slightly bored, rustling programs or ogling the women entering the boxes. This was the city in miniature, perhaps the best of the city, and Martin's simple soul was more than ever impressed by the sense of his own unimportance.

In some white, filmy thing which brought out the bright tints of her hair and the delicacy of her coloring, Fanny Simpson sat beside him, flushing prettily with eagerness and interest. Martin adored her, and though it scarcely seemed possible that there was any chance for him, he still dared to hope. He had not spoken; he couldn't, with his prospects—not yet. And there had been moments when he had thought that Fanny might care for Joe Bass—just a subtle expression that she showed now and then, a kind of "mothering" glance that Martin had surprised when Joe wasn't looking.

The spectacle of the drama unfolded, and almost at once the gorgeous notes of the tenor soared into the phrases of the great love-song. It was in the middle of the aria that a belated box-party entered with a commotion that excited the ire even of the most stoical of the listeners, and took their seats, chattering audibly. But it was not until the *entre-acte*, when the auditorium was illuminated again, that the identity of the occupants of the box was revealed.

"The Barton Savages," said Fanny. "And—the girl in sea-blue—why, I believe— Isn't it Miss Ryan?"

Martin stared up at the box. He caught Mary's profile now, though the deep red of her hair should have been almost enough to have identified her. He heard his companion's exclamation.

"Oh! How lovely she is!"

Mary's dress was of simple design. She was too clever at this important hour to wear anything too daring or garish—though even in its simplicity her gown was daring enough, cut very low at the back and front, showing her dead-white shoulders and breast. She wore no ornaments in her hair or at her neck—only a mottled bluish orchid at her bodice. But it was undeniable that the pose of her head was queenly. There were many others in the parquet and in the adjoining boxes who shared Fanny Simpson's praise, for a hundred opera-glasses were aimed up at her. People were talking about her. Martin smiled knowingly and whispered to Fanny:

"Well—she's gone and done it."

"I don't understand—"

"Mary Ryan," he said. "She played a trump."

"A trump—in what way?"

"The invitation to the Savages' box. Of course you've heard the gossip about Mr. Savage and Mary Ryan?"

"Yes, I've heard it. But people *will* talk—I'm sure there can't be anything—"

"Oh, I don't say there is. But don't you see, if Mrs. Savage accepts her, why should Mary Ryan care what people are saying? Oh, she's clever! She can laugh at the gossip now."

Fanny was thoughtful for a moment.

"I thought her clever, but I can't believe that she's so unscrupulous as to—well, to be a 'bread and salt' traitor."

"Well," commented Martin dryly, "it's *his* hospitality, too."

There was a silence, in which Fanny watched Mary's animated profile as she talked with Mrs. Savage at the front of the box, a bit of comedy which might have been bitterly satirical if Fanny had accepted Martin Daingerfield's point of view. And then in a low tone Fanny commented:

"You don't like Miss Ryan, do you, Martin?"

"No, I don't," he replied frankly. "She's too smart! No girl's got a right to be as smart as Mary Ryan is."

She smiled. "But that's hardly a reason for disliking her."

"Maybe I don't like her because she doesn't like me."

"Have you offended her in any way?"

"No. But she can't *get* anything out of me."

Fanny was a little surprised at his bitterness. "But Martin! She can't get anything out of Joe Bass, and she's very fond of him." And after a pause, as he didn't reply: "Isn't she?"

"She's got a mighty poor way of showing it. That's all I say. I guess maybe that's one reason why she and I don't get along."

"What do you mean, Martin?"

"That she never has any time for Joe any more. And Joe Bass is too big a man to fetch and carry for a girl like her."

"Oh, I don't know."

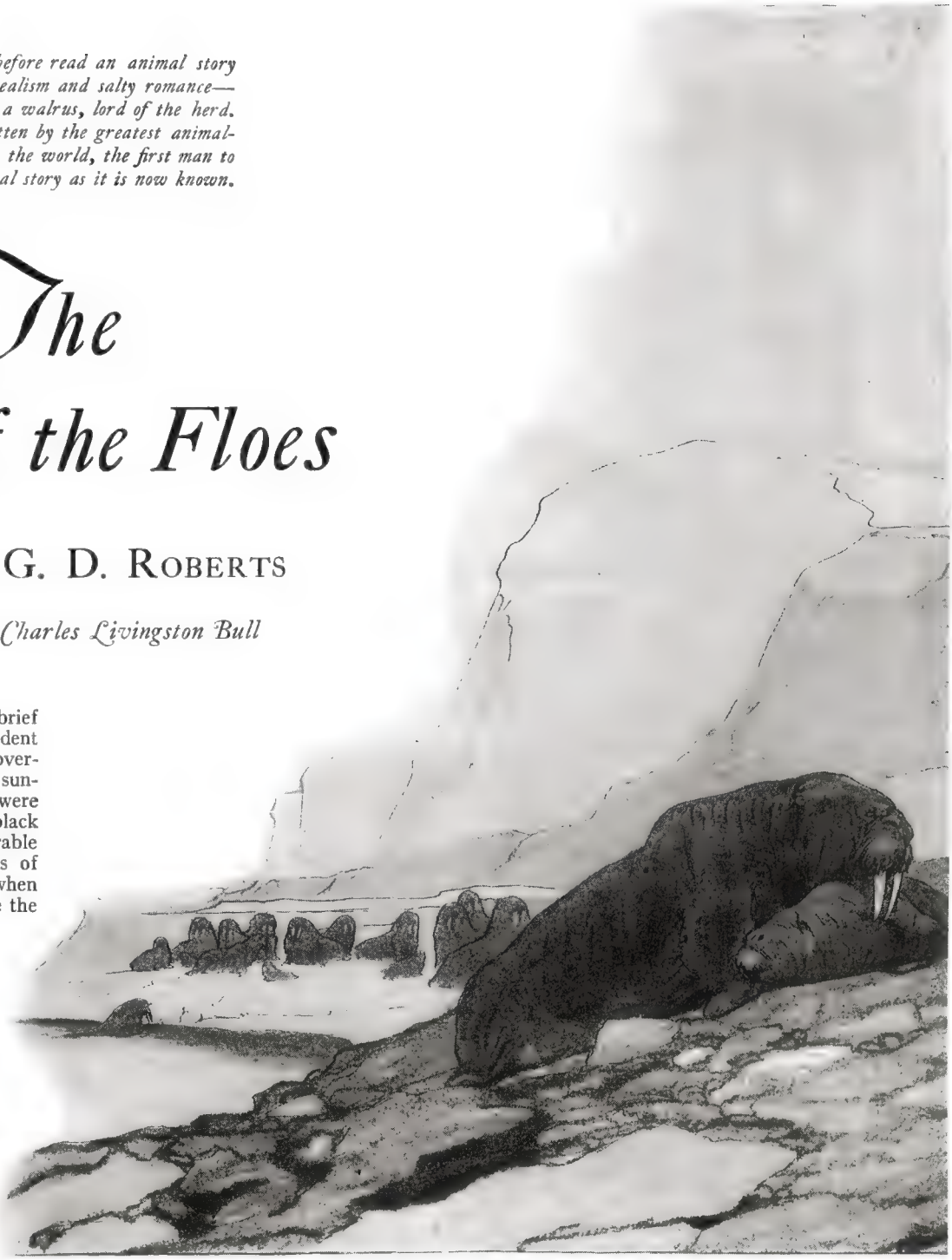
The orchestra began the music of the second act; the murmur of conversation was slowly hushed, and the curtain rose; but the faint silhouette of Mary Ryan in *(Continued on page 143)*

You've never before read an animal story like this—icy realism and salty romance—the Odyssey of a walrus, lord of the herd. And it is written by the greatest animal-story writer in the world, the first man to write the animal story as it is now known.

The King of the Floes

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

Illustrated by Charles Livingston Bull



The bear made off and climbed to a ridge where no walrus could follow.

SO much to be done, so few brief weeks to do it in, that the ardent Arctic summer was working overtime. The long, long months of sunless night and unimaginable cold were to be undone—the months of black and shrieking storm, of intolerable winds death-cold from the voids of space, of intolerable stillness when the ghost-lights danced low above the endless, naked ice and death of the Roof-of-the-world. The sun, in haste to console after his long forgetfulness, was circling in the sky throughout the whole twenty-four hours, never quite disappearing below the hazy pink horizon. Under the unremitting pour of his eager beams, icy pinnacles cracked and crumbled; deep fissures of ineffable sapphire opened in the ice-walls of eternal glacier, and ran with sharp reports along the tumbled fields of the floe. Here and there appeared wide patches of green and dancing water, with narrow lanes leading out to the open sea, where it chafed incessantly at its shrinking boundaries.

Shoreward, low ridges, and raw, jagged teeth of rock, black and slaty-blue and rust-red, came into view above the limitless white desolation. Along the southerly bases of the rocks, and in every sunward-facing, sheltered hollow, where the harsh soil was bare of snow and thawed and warmed to a depth of two or three inches over its foundations of impregnable frost, a film of light but vivid green was springing into hurried life, and already starred thick with tiny blooms, pink, yellow and ethereal lavender, all in haste to fertilize and be fertilized, and to ripen their precious seeds and drop them back into the mold, ere the night of cold should again close down upon them. Amid the blooms bustled innumerable tiny flies and gleaming beetles, with here and there a flickering mite of a butterfly, paper white or pallid mauve. Over the faces of the rocks were spreading stains and smudges of pinkish gray and dull greenish yellow, where the newborn lichens were reproducing themselves in the fecundating radiance. The still air was faintly musical with the babble of innumerable rills.

At one point, through some whim of tide and current, the ice-floe had drawn quite clear of the shore, leaving some three hundred yards of beach uncovered. It was a beach ribbed with ice-ground ridges of purple-black rock, which now, at low tide, held a miscellaneous drift of weeds and disrooted mussels and stranded crustaceans in their shallow intervening pools.

From behind a jutting shoulder of black-and-purple rock came, suddenly and silently, a long, slouching, terrifying figure, the great white bear of the Arctic. His narrow, low-browed, snaky head and black-tipped muzzle were stretched straight out before him, and his nostrils quivered as he sniffed the clear air for the taint of anything that might ease his mighty appetite. Living prey he did not expect, at the moment, or the terror of the North would not have shown his dread shape so openly upon that naked stretch of sunlit shore. But for nearly an hour, with the patience of all great hunters, he had lain hidden and motionless among the rocks, hoping that the seals, his favorite quarry, might be tempted shoreward to bask in this sheltered cove. Balked of this hope, he wandered down the beach to see what gleanings from the harvest of the tides might be gathered in the rock-pools.

The bereaved cow was determined to get her young, dead or alive, back to the shelter of the sea.

A few mussels and whelks he had already scooped up and crunched greedily; a glutinous, musky-flavored squid he had gulped down with relish, when he came upon a prize worth his quest. It was a big rock-cod, lodged, white belly upward, in a fissure of the ledge. He clawed it forth and turned it over exultantly. It was fresh-killed—a great mouthful bitten cleanly out of the thick of the back.

Hastily bolting the fish, this wary hunter shrank down flat upon his belly, making himself as small and inconspicuous as possible, and scanned the sea beyond the ice with savage, hopeful eyes. He knew at once that that bite was the work of a seal, of a seal killing eagerly, this way and that, among swarming victims, without stopping to gather in the booty.

That seal and his fellows, their hunger glutted, might presently come out upon the floe to bask and doze in the sunshine.

Soundlessly as a cloud-shadow, and almost as unnoticeably, the bear twisted and crawled his way out to the edge of the bright floe, and flattened himself down between two hummocks. As soon as he was motionless, he seemed to melt from view, so perfectly did he match himself to his surroundings. The keenest, most suspicious eye would have to look twice or thrice before detecting, among the grayish and yellowish blurs upon the shadowy whiteness, the outlines of that sinister form and snaky, black-snouted head. The point of blackness, instead of betraying its owner, had the effect of making his faint outlines less conspicuous and diverting the eye from them. Here he lay rigid as if frozen into the ice, hoping that one of the expected seals would emerge close before him, within reach of the lightning stroke of his armed paw. If not, then he would wait till the seals had floundered out upon the floe, intercept their retreat, and probably secure at least one victim before they could get back to their refuge in the water.

The bear had lain there in tense expectancy for perhaps a dozen minutes when suddenly, just beneath his nose, the gray-green sea surged heavily. A huge, glistening, rusty-black head shot upward, almost in the watcher's face; and he found himself confronted by the hideous, tusked and whiskered mask of a gigantic bull-walrus.

The two massive yellow tusks growing downward from the

mighty upper jaw of the walrus were over two feet in length, straight, gleaming, and tapered to a fine point. The long, stiff whiskers standing out on each side of the muzzle were thick as porcupine quills. The small, steady eyes, set deep in the low-crowned skull, flamed into sudden rage as they found themselves staring into the fierce eyes of the bear.

For some seconds the two great beasts, thus brought so startlingly face to face, eyed each other unwaveringly without a movement on either side. The bear, in the first wrath of his disappointment, itched to slash across that grotesque and defiant mask with his rending claws. But his sagacity, well trained in the harsh struggle of Arctic life, restrained him. Presently he shifted his gaze for a swift instant, and noted that the surface of the sea all about the edge of the floe was dotted with other dark and glistening whiskered heads, most of them tusked like that of the bull before him. He knew that the tuskless heads were those of fat young calves. The walrus herd was coming ashore. He reflected that, secure in their strength and their numbers, they might grow careless in the lazy sunshine, and then, if they thought he had gone away, one of those calves might possibly stray within his reach. In any case, he had nothing to gain but discomfiture if he should remain to try conclusions with the giant walrus—who at this moment seemed quite ready for the adventure.

With a throaty snarl the bear arose to his full height, turned his furry rump contemptuously upon his rival, and stalked off to the beach to disappear among the rocks, as if acknowledging that it was useless for him to try to hunt walrus. Immediately the bull heaved his enormous, warty carcass higher from the water, hooked his tusks over the solid edge of the floe, and with a loud grunt drew himself forth upon the ice, where he lay sprawling complacently, to watch his foe's retreat. In five minutes or so the whole herd, following with confidence their invincible leader, had lumbered forth upon the floe with noisy splashings and gruntings, and were basking their uncouth bulks in the genial glow.

Counting himself, and not without reason, King of the Floes, Ah-wook, the giant walrus, in the complacency of his self-trust, forgot all about the great white bear as soon as that crafty marauder had vanished from his sight. And the whole herd forgot with him. The only foe whom Ah-wook had learned to fear was man—represented by the Eskimo, with his swift kayak and deadly swift harpoon. For months there had been no sign of man in all that region. It was a fitting time, when the Arctic sun burned so benignly, for the King of the Floes to relax his vigilance.

With ponderous floppings and gruntings, the herd scattered all over the ice. Their rough and oily-black hides, almost bursting with fatness, glistened in the sunlight. The unwieldy cows, tusked like the bulls and almost as ferocious-looking (but the tenderest and most devoted of mothers), sprawled happily as they nursed their ever-greedy calves. These latter, many of them almost as big as their mothers, but as yet without tusks, were as grotesquely unlovely as the offspring of such monstrous parents might be expected to be. As a rule, there is some charm or grace or winsomeness to be found in the younglings of even the clumsiest and ugliest of the wild kindreds. But the baby walrus can only be accounted a gross caricature of babyhood.

IT chanced that one young cow, less wary and more adventurous than her companions, was smitten with a whim to try basking on the dry, gray, sun-warmed ledges of the beach instead of on the ice. With her half-grown calf floundering anxiously at her side, she slipped off the floe, and with gusty snortings worked her way some twenty or thirty paces up the shore till she gained a flat ledge which was precisely to her liking. Settling herself complacently,—for never before had she experienced so warm a couch,—she turned and called to the calf, which, finding the rocks uncomfortable to travel over, had dropped a few yards behind. The fat and flabby youngster squealed protestingly, as if to say he was coming as fast as he could; and then, seized with sudden fear of the strange element upon which he found himself, he stopped, and looked back longingly at the safe water and the familiar ice.

At this moment, from behind the nearest shoulder of rock a huge white shape burst forth, launched itself, with a clatter of iron claws on ledge and gravel, across the open, and fell upon the unhappy calf. One blow of the terrific mailed paw (which looked so furry soft) smashed the youngster's neck, and it collapsed, quivering like an enormous mass of dark-brown jelly. In the same second the bear seized it by the head and with frantic haste started to drag the prize away to some safe refuge among the rocks—for well he knew the devotion and the blind fury of the walrus mother.

In spite of the great bulk of the carcass—little short of half a ton in weight—the bear handled it almost as a fox would have handled an extra-fat hare. But for all his agility and his tremendous strength, he was not quite quick enough to get away with the prize. With a bellowing scream of grief and rage, the mother hurled herself downward from her ledge, rearing and plunging over the rocks at such speed that the slaughterer was overtaken before he had gained a score of yards. With an angry growl he dropped his booty and sprang aside just in time to escape such a blow from those pile-driving tusks as would have brought his career to a gory end. Circling nimbly, as the mother came down upon her flippers at the end of her plunge and paused half covering the body of her young, he dashed in and sprang upon her back, tearing savagely with his murderous claws.

But the cow's hide was too tough, the padding of blubber beneath it too thick, for either his claws or his teeth to make much impression upon it. He tore a couple of hideous red gashes, indeed; but to the maddened cow they were mere surface wounds, of as little consequence as a bloody nose to a fighting schoolboy. She reared her monstrous shoulders again and shook off her adversary, at the same time swinging about with such lightning speed that she caught him a glancing stroke upon the rump with one tusk as he scurried out of reach. Slight enough it seemed, that blow, but it tore away fur and hide, and from its effects the bear was to go limping for weeks thereafter.

RECOGNIZING himself overmatched, but seeing that the cow was too engrossed with her dead to attempt the vain task of pursuing him, the bear sat down on his haunches and surveyed the situation in a cold fury, his jaws slavering red foam, his splendid white coat disheveled and plastered with blood. What he saw was enough to daunt the stoutest heart that ever throbbed beneath a furry hide. The giant Ah-wook, grunting his wrath, was just floundering up from the lip of the floe; and on either side of him a line of bulls and cows only less monstrous than their chief, their whiskers bristling, their vengeful tusks gleaming and lunging as the dreadful array wallowed forward. With rather more haste than consisted with his dignity the bear made off, limping, and climbed to a ridge where he knew no walrus could ever follow him. There, well hidden, he lay down to lick his wound and to watch what his foes might do.

Seeing their enemy thus routed, the angry herd calmed down, and presently turned back to their basking on the floe. But Ah-wook came straight till he reached the side of the bereaved cow. To his practiced eye it was plain at once that the calf was dead, and this knowledge he somehow conveyed to the mother. But she paid no heed to him. She was determined to get her young, dead or alive, back to the kind, familiar shelter of the sea. Hooking her tusks beneath the lax bulk, she lifted and dragged it clumsily till she had got it halfway down the slope. Then it fell into a deep crevice and jammed itself there in such a way that she could get no hold or purchase upon it. Ah-wook, though he kept close to her side protectingly, made no attempt to help her. The youngster was dead, and therefore of no more consequence in his eyes. At last, in despair, the mother gave up, and made off sullenly toward the floe; and Ah-wook followed close behind her, from time to time pausing to look back and glare defiance at the lonely line of rocks.

As he watched his invincible adversaries depart, leaving his victim behind them, the bear licked his lips in satisfaction and contempt. He was going to win, after all. But he was in no hurry. He would let the stupid sea-beasts forget their anger before he would descend to reclaim the booty. He knew the walrus were great feeders. They would soon grow hungry, and would betake themselves again to the sea to grub for their coarse provender on the muddy bottom of the bay. He himself was hungry, to be sure; but his appetite had already waited some time, and could afford to wait a little longer.

As he lay there in the sun, nursing his well-founded anticipations, and disturbed only by the ache in his wounded haunch, he caught sight of a pair of little blue Arctic foxes stealthily creeping forth upon the beach. Their fine noses wrinkled and sniffed hungrily as they caught the taint of fresh blood upon the air. Presently they located the body of the dead walrus calf wedged in its crevice.

To the cunning little prowlers such a find was almost too good to be true. It aroused their suspicions. Surely there was a catch in it somewhere. They crept forward with the utmost caution, glancing about them at every noiseless step, and taking advantage of every cranny or boulder to conceal their advance.

At first glimpse of the small intruders the bear had given vent

Doubling back just as his rash assailants reached him, he caught one of them full on the side.

to a low growl of annoyance. The tiny beasts, of course, could make no serious impression on that vast bulk of flesh. They could do no more than gnaw away some fragments of the tough hide. But like all the hunting beasts, the bear was very jealous of his kill, and hated to have any other creature, however humble, sample the feast before he himself had had a chance to satisfy his appetite. He restrained himself, however, till the foremost of the two foxes was within a foot or two of the body. Then suddenly he leaned forth head and shoulders from his hiding-place, and uttered a short, strident snarl of menace.

The foxes cast one look upon the dreadful, grinning mask that glared down upon them from the ridge, then scurried off respectfully. But as soon as they felt themselves safely out of sight, they halted, circled about and crept to a place of concealment in the very crest of the ridge, whence they could command a clear view of the bear's subsequent actions. They considered, not unreasonably, that there should be some substantial remnants to be picked up after his banquet.

THE bear, meanwhile, was growing impatient. The pain of his wound was not improving his temper. But the walrus herd still basked complacently on the ice, in full view; and their colossal leader, keeping his post on the landward edge of the floe, appeared dangerously alert and watchful. The hungry bear felt

that there was nothing to do but continue the dull game of waiting.

How much longer his prudence might have kept curb upon his appetite it would be hard to say; but now an unforeseen factor came into the problem. Though the vast northern solitudes seem so empty, they are nevertheless secretly populous, teeming with furtive life; and news of any considerable killing—which must mean food for some one—travels mysteriously. The wandering airs make haste to carry it, and none who receives the tidings is left indifferent.

A pack of half a dozen Arctic wolves, long-jawed and ravenous, emerged from a deep ravine which cleft the ridge, and trotted boldly forth upon the beach, sniffing interrogatively. Straightway they spotted the rich prize there in plain view, jammed in the crevice. And straightway, disdaining craft or investigation, confident in their ferocity and their speed, they swept down upon it at full gallop.

For the patient watcher on the ridge this was too much. With a roar of indignation he projected himself down the slope like an avalanche, and reached the body of the young walrus some ten paces ahead of the wolves. Standing over it on three legs, he turned, with fangs bared and one paw uplifted, and faced the pack with a low snarl of warning.

The wolves, well knowing the power of that terrific paw, halted abruptly. The leader sat upon his haunches, with his tongue hanging out, and blinked sagaciously. The rest of the pack divided, two to one side and three to the other, and encircled their huge antagonist, their eyes glinting green, and their jaws slavering. Keeping just at a safe distance of a dozen feet, or so, they uttered never a sound; and the bear, too, stopped his snarling, and waited. He felt pretty confident that, bold though they were, they would not dare to close with him; but he was taking no risks.

And out on the floe, not fifty paces away, the walrus lifted their tusked and whiskered heads and stared with lazy curiosity. Ah-wook, indeed, went so far as to flounder to the very edge of the floe, half minded to take a hand in the affair and see those puny land-beasts scatter before his onset. He feared neither bear nor wolves. But he was so secure in his strength and in the armor of his massive hide that it hardly seemed worth his while to score so cheap a triumph. In the end his indolence conquered, and he was content to watch the drama.

It was the bear, at length, who decided to force the issue. Suddenly, like a coiled spring let loose, he hurled himself at the leader of the pack, who leaped aside like a hare, just in time to save himself. At the same instant two of the other wolves dashed in and snapped at the bear's hindquarters. The bear, however, had anticipated this very move, and his charge upon the leader had been merely a feint. Doubling back just as his rash assailants reached him, he caught one of them full on the side, ripping him open and hurling him twenty feet away. The rest of the pack, to whom nothing in the way of meat came amiss, promptly fell upon the corpse, and devoured it; and the bear, happy to see them so well occupied, made haste to take the edge off his own hunger. Then he proceeded laboriously to drag the carcass up among the rocks, where he could conclude his meal more comfortably.

And the wolves, grown less ravenous and more discreet, followed him at a prudent distance, remembering that when he had well gorged himself, he would go away somewhere to sleep, leaving them to feast at their ease.

ABOUT this time, though the sun shone as benignantly as ever, a certain restlessness began to show itself in the basking herd of the walrus. As if with one simultaneous impulse, they all began to grunt, swaying upon their flippers. Ah-wook forthwith forgot his lazy interest in the great white bear and the wolves. Whirling his gigantic bulk about, he floundered through the herd to the farther edge of the floe, and plunged, with a resounding splash, into the quiet green sea. In hot haste the whole herd followed him. For perhaps a minute the still air was loud with the heavy splashings. Then every dark form vanished, while the water heaved and creamed along the edges of the ice. The feeding-time of the walrus had arrived.

This little bay, as I have said, was comparatively shallow, and its bottom, for the most part, of rich deep mud, ribbed with flat ledges which the tide-wash kept scoured. It was a fruitful breeding place for huge, coarse clams and mussels, and innumerable crustaceans large and small. In fact, it was swarming with shoal-water life, and hence was an ideal pasturage for the herds of the walrus. Scattered all over the teeming bottom, the hungry monsters grubbed up the mud with their tusks, or with the same efficient weapons raked the rock-loving shellfish from the ledges, rarely troubling to crush the hard morsels between their irresistible jaws, but preferring to gulp them down whole, shell and all. And if they swallowed quantities of mud and small stones at the same time, that did not trouble either their undiscriminating palates or their incomparably hardy stomachs. Above them, as they fed, the sunlight glimmered down greenly through the tranquil tide; and the silver-bellied cod and hake and pollock, singly or in shoals, darted hither and thither in confusion, while the fat and sluggish flat-fish—plaice and flounder and fluke—disturbed in their feeding on the mud, flounced up indignantly and glided off to serener pasturage.

SUDDENLY among the bewildered shoals of cod and pollock appeared a gleaming and terrible shape before which they all scattered like plover before a goshawk. Some sixteen or seventeen feet in length, slender and sinister, and with a keen lance about two feet long standing straight out from its pointed nose, it came soundlessly and with appalling swiftness from out of the great deeps. It paid no attention to the panic-stricken fish. It hung poised for a second or two above the unsuspecting walrus herd, staring down upon them with round, blazing eyes as hard as glass. Then, having selected as the most manageable prey a very young calf which clung close to the mother's side as she nosed in the mud, it gave one screwlike sweep of its mighty tail, shot downward, and drove its sword clean through the youngling's tender body, cleaving its heart.

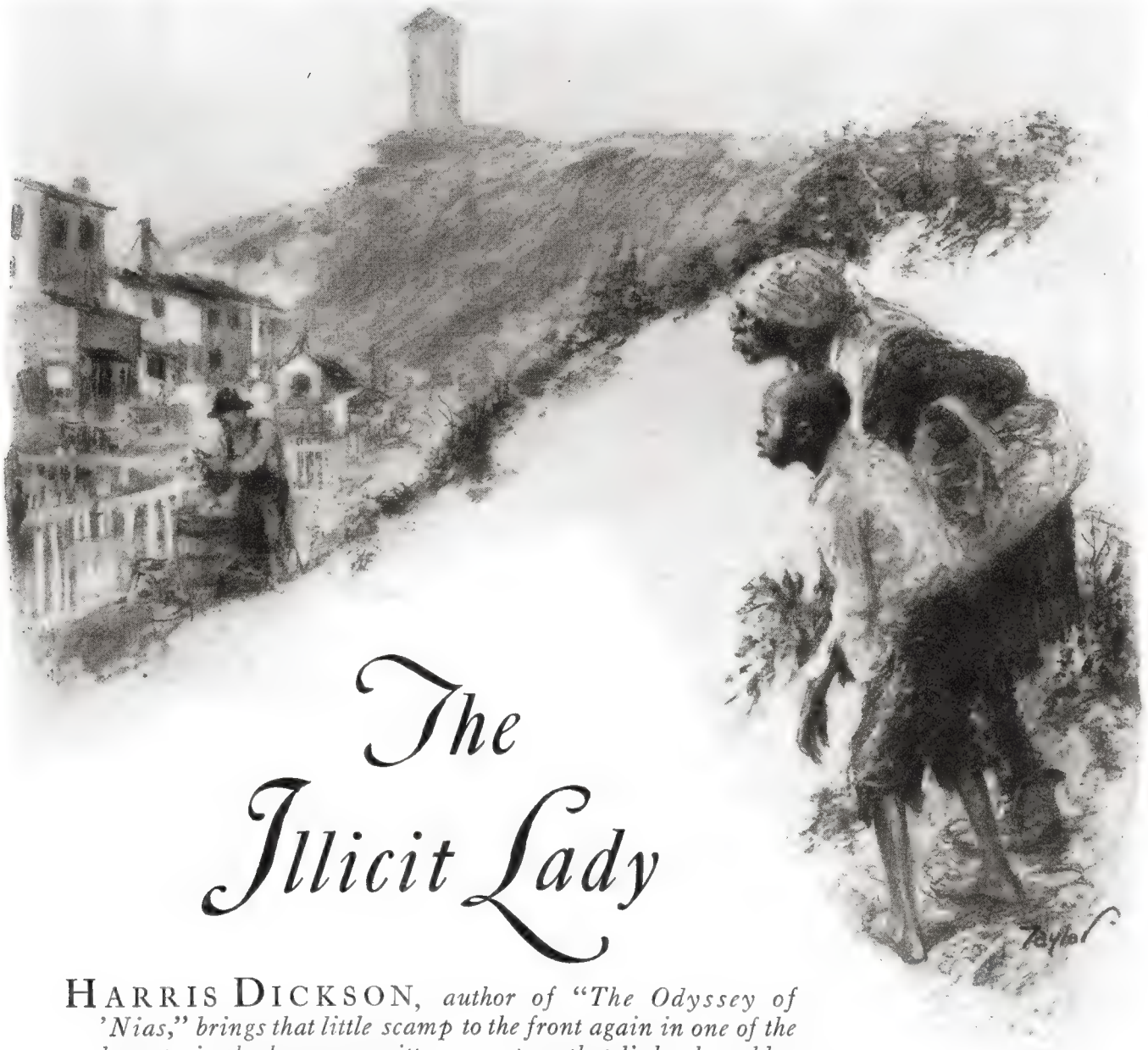
Ordinarily, the tactics of the giant swordfish would have been to bear away the victim on his sword, to be stabbed to fragments and devoured comfortably at a distance from the herd. But in this case, the fatal thrust having been delivered from above, the prize was not impaled in such a position as to be carried off conveniently. The slayer, therefore, withdrew his weapon, backed away a few yards at a lower level, and with a short but irresistible rush transfixed the prize once more, this time through the flank, in the same movement lifting it several feet clear of the bottom.

The outraged mother, bewildered for a moment, now reared herself direct in the slayer's path, frantic and dangerous. The great fish, his sword burdened and useless, was compelled to back away and change his course. And at this instant Ah-wook, as nimble in the water as a seal, took a hand in the murderous game. His presence, close at hand, had been ignored by the overconfident swordfish, who expected no interference except from the mother of his victim. As he swerved aside, somewhat heavily by reason of the burden upon his sword, a colossal black bulk suddenly overshadowed him, and two long tusks, piercing him through the middle of the back, crushed him down irresistibly upon the bottom.

Although the great swordfish was a good four hundred pounds of corded muscle and galvanic nervous energy, he was no match for the mighty bull walrus, whose weight was over a ton and whose cunning far outclassed his own. Nevertheless his gigantic convulsions, and the paroxysmal lashings of his tremendous tail, enabled him to bear his captor along, hither and thither among the astonished herd, plowing deep furrows in the mud. But not all his frantic writhings could shake loose the grip of those inexorable tusks or lighten the crushing, suffocating pressure upon his back. And all the time Ah-wook—who nursed a special grudge against the swordfish tribe by reason of a gnarled and ancient scar along his flank—kept boring down inexorably with all his weight, and rending and grinding within the body of his adversary. The mud was churned up, and the green tide, for fathoms all about the titanic contest, boiled to the surface, brown and frothy and blood-streaked.

Then on a sudden, his backbone wrenched apart, the swordfish ceased to struggle and lay limp.

For a few seconds more Ah-wook continued to shake him as a terrier shakes a rat, jerking the body about savagely as if to glut his vengeance to the full. Then, his laboring lungs warning him that it was time to take breath, he withdrew his tusks and shot up to the surface. Here he lay floating for a minute or two, deeply drinking in the vital air; and presently the water all about him was dotted with the staring heads of his followers. Next, floating belly upward, appeared the long, mangled body of the swordfish, the calf still firmly impaled upon its sword. Ah-wook grunted scornfully at the sight, raised himself high in the water to glare about him as if in challenge to other adversaries, and at length led the way in triumph back to the floe, confirmed in his kingship both by sea and land.



The Illicit Lady

HARRIS DICKSON, *author of "The Odyssey of 'Nias," brings that little scamp to the front again in one of the best stories he has ever written—a story that links the golden days of the Old South to this very hour in the era of aridity.*

Illustrated by H. Weston Taylor

CASTLE HILL rises almost in the center of Vicksburg, thrusting up its huge water-tower that everybody can see from everywhere. Yet its eastern slope is a lonely place, steep, overgrown with brush and scarred by deep-washed gullies. At sunset a shriveled negro woman came hobbling down this declivity with a basket on her arm, and a sack flung across her shoulders, poncho-fashion. Her skirt, too, was fashionably short, but Aunt Cannie had nothing plumper to exhibit than two naked, bony shanks that lost themselves in a pair of men's brogans. Several times she halted and turned, frowning upward at some schoolboys who were playing on the hilltop. Plainly she apprehended danger from these children and hated to trust them behind her back. "Dem devilish boys!" she mumbled, and tottered on again.

Below her, in "the Bottom," a dozen negro cabins crouched beneath the rear windows of white folks' houses that fronted in the other direction, on Monroe Street; and at one of these windows Aunt Cannie kept glancing. Then she caught sight of something else.

"Run here, 'Nias," she summoned her attendant imp, and a small black creature crept to her side.

"Look yonder." Her skinny finger pointed to a man wearing blue overalls. "'Nias, does you know dat white feller?"

Two sharp little eyes peered out from an intensely black face, like twin white marbles from a bucket of tar, watching the overalled man who stood beside Lawyer Madison's back fence. Only once did the man squint upward at Madison's window.

"He aint nary shop man," 'Nias decided positively. "Neither no *in*gineer."

"Jes what I 'lowed. He's spyin' on Harry."

Stretching her neck to its scrawny utmost, Aunt Cannie saw the stranger pick up an empty champagne bottle. She knew, and 'Nias knew, that it matched the full quart that Aunt Cannie now carried beneath the sack in her basket. Anybody might have picked up one of those bottles. A hundred of them had been tossed from Madison's window. But Aunt Cannie "got a hunch" of trouble when she saw the stranger examining it so carefully.

Prohibition Agent Saugsbee showed his deep concern in the empty, which was labeled *"Baudelot Frères, Bar-le-duc, 1912."* He poured the last drops into his palm and smelled. Genuine stuff! Highbrow booze pointed to top-notchers, possibly to a certain famous stock secreted by Enrico Montagna, the stock that Saugsbee had been searching for months to uncover. Aunt Cannie saw him toss his head like a hound striking a hot trail, then hurry away from the Bottom by a path that zigzagged up to

Monroe Street. As Saugsbee figured it, the empties that went out by the back window must have come in full by the front door. He had located the window and would now take a look at the door.

" 'Nias," Aunt Cannie whispered, "you gotta come here dis very night an' tote away dem bottles."

"Yas'm."

This singular hag—voodoo, evil-eye and philanthropist—was the only power that 'Nias feared or obeyed. She sent him reconnoitering ahead, and after waiting awhile followed him by the same zigzag path that Saugsbee had taken.

FROM his life of daily disillusion Mr. Hiram Saugsbee had become a cynic. In his professional catalogue no human character rated above suspicion. He had so often caught Mrs. C. J. Cæsar with the goods, that Saugsbee suspected all the people all the time. Yet he paid no attention to the tiny 'Nias, who was chucking brickbats at a rooster when Aunt Cannie came toiling upward from the Bottom. Reaching the level of Monroe Street, the ancient creature paused for breath, so very near that Saugsbee got a close look, without imagining the connection between so poor a creature and so rich a wine.

He might have reached his hand into her basket and pulled out a quart of Baudelot Frères, but Saugsbee didn't catch Aunt Cannie with the quart, for no bat of an eye betrayed her agitation as she turned from him and hobbled northward. Nor did the slightest glance suggest that she had ever before seen Harry Madison's house as she passed it and turned in at the third gate beyond.

But when 'Nias came running back from Trinity corner and reported that the blue overalls had gone, Aunt Cannie darted out again, like a rat scurrying from one hole to another, and dodged, without knocking, into Madison's front doorway.

"Oh, Miss Ellen," she called to the upper floor. "It's me."

"Glad to see you," a weak voice replied. "Come right up."

Nodding and chuckling at her escape, Aunt Cannie took a bottle of champagne from her basket, slipped it under her apron, and hurried upstairs to Ellen Madison's door.

"Howdy, honey! Hope you's feelin' better." She paused at the threshold.

"Yes, I'm better—I hope." The pale young wife tried to smile as she invited: "Come in. Sit down."

"Yas'm. Jest a minute. I 'lowed to drap in dis evenin' an' see how you's gittin' 'long."

She spoke as if her call were the merest accident; yet it happened daily at the same hour. Always Aunt Cannie found the pathetic invalid stretched upon her chaise longue, gazing through a window at the heights of Castle Hill. And always she found the same lubberly black Lily, with the same impatience watching the same clock.

"Miss Ellen, I reckon Lily mought jes as well go home. I'll set here wid you until Mr. Harry comes."

These lilies of the house who toil and spin so grudgingly, never wait for a second suggestion to depart; but not until the emancipated nurse had gone blundering downstairs did Aunt Cannie unmask her champagne and place it on the table. Then she tapped the bottle with a spoon and chuckled.

"Look, Miss Ellen! Watch dem bubbles. Dis is a *live* one."

"It's perfectly wonderful," Ellen smiled. "Just like a fairy-tale for you to bring this every afternoon."

"Huh! Yo' doctor say you 'quires sumpin stout."

"Aunt Cannie,"—the big brown eyes glanced up with a query even gentler than the voice,—"why are you so good to me?"

" 'Cause Mr. Harry's good to me," the negress answered promptly. "I got fo'teen chillun, an' he 'sists me wid 'em."

"Fourteen children! My, what a family!"

"Yas'm—an' my twins aint nigh a year ol'."

"Twins? A year old?" The childless wife stared so incredulously that Aunt Cannie laughed.

"Lordee, Miss Ellen! Dem aint my own dear chillun—jes orphants what I took up."

It seemed marvelous that a forlorn old garbage-picker could maintain fourteen children; so Ellen asked:

"How did you happen to start your orphanage?"

"Huh! I aint never started it. De Lord done it. He led my steps to de ash-barrel where I foun' de fust baby, which was Jake. Chillun is like flies; one draws another. Somebody lef' Zalia at my house, an' she made two. Next I got Trixy off a shanty-boat. Den Dora's ma went away an' forgot her little gal at de railroad depot. An' de polices gimme 'Nias cause dey couldn't do nothin' wid him."

" 'Nias?" Ellen spoke quickly. "Yes, I've heard Harry speak of him. He's the *bad* one?"

"No'm, he aint. No'm, he aint." Aunt Cannie bristled. "Dem polices kept puttin' 'Nias in jail for stealin' an' sech. An' folks driv' him away from playin' wid deir chillun. Dey ought to treat him gentle. Dat boy minds me same as a lamb."

"Fourteen. Aunt Cannie, don't they give you a great deal of trouble?"

"Sholy. Dey's 'bleeged to be mo' or less worriment. But I loves babies, an' aint never had nary chil' of my own."

Too late she realized her awkwardness in reminding this empty-armed mother of the babe that had been taken. A spasm of anguish crossed Ellen's face as Aunt Cannie gave the pillow a soothing pat and tried to make her forget.

"Now, den, honey, us kin talk some mo' about dem ol'-timy folks. See dat big standpipe on top o' de hill? Dat warn't dere in my young days, neither dat Walnut Street School down yonder, which sot dem meddlesome little boys to skylarkin' where dey aint got no business. It used to be all one hill, wid great big trees, an' windin' roads, an' flower gardens, when de Robbs had deir castle—"

"A castle?" The wan face brightened. "A castle, right here in Vicksburg?"

"Yes, honey. Dat's how come dey calls it 'Castle Hill' to dis very day."

Like a weaver of tales before the divan of some Oriental princess, Aunt Cannie sat upon a hassock spinning her threads into yarns of the long ago.

"I was born on dat hill—me an' Miss Vanna Robb nigh de same day. But Lord, Lord! All of 'em's gone away now."

"What became of the castle?"

"Huh! Dem Yankees tore it down. After Gin'l Grant come bustin' into Vicksburg, he say to ol' marster: 'I took a notion to set some cannons on dis hill. Goin' to tear yo' house down.' Ol' marster rared up powerful straight an' 'plied back: 'You got de 'vantage o' me, suh,' while ol' miss stood dere wid her lips sorter quiverin'. An' den, one day—"

The young wife sat almost erect, with bloodless fingers gripping her chair as Aunt Cannie told of the tragedies that had scattered her white-folks, until the lone negro woman herself represented all that was left of the Robbs. Yet with faith unshaken she insisted:

"Missy, dey's comin' home. Sump'n keeps a-promisin' me dat much befo' I die. Ev'y mornin' I wakes up an' says: '*Dis* is de day. *Dis* is de day.' "

BOTH women were so absorbed that they did not hear a man climbing the stair, nor notice Harry Madison when he halted in the doorway. His anxious face cleared, for Ellen was getting the medicine she needed—distraction, her thoughts being diverted from herself and from her loss. So Madison strode in with that wholesome air of his, and laughed.

"Upon my word, Aunt Cannie, I'm not sure which is doing Ellen the most good, your wine or your stories," he declared.

"Yas suh, Mr. Harry." Her wrinkles tangled into a grin. "Me an' Miss Ellen is been havin' a nice long talk. She's a *heap* better."

"So I see." Then his eye fell upon the new bottle, and he became preoccupied with the same old mental groping to discover the source of Ellen's clandestine wine-supply.

From the beginning this had been a conundrum. When Ellen's physician first suggested that champagne might build up her feeble strength, Aunt Cannie had walked in with a quart, remarking that she "jes happened to pick dis up" and would take no money. "Aint you my lawyer?" she had argued; and Ellen's deadly weakness left him no choice but to accept the first bottle as a token of gratitude. The second? The tenth? The twentieth? Where could she be getting it? After trying in vain to read Aunt Cannie's face, Madison turned to a small refrigerator and produced the remains of yesterday's bottle, from which he squeezed its ultimate drop into a glass.

"We can't waste this," he remarked. "Must be stingy."

"No, you needn't," Aunt Cannie contradicted him. "Give de chil' plenty. I'll fetch two of 'em tomorrow."

"Two? Have you got a warehouse?"

"Never mind what I got." The old woman held her stubborn tongue until Madison started to throw out the empty; then she caught at his arm.

"Hold on, Mr. Harry. Leggo dat bottle. An' please, suh, don't chuck out no mo'."

"Why not? I've thrown away a hundred."

The old woman caught at his arm. "Hold on, Mr. Harry. Leggo dat bottle. An' please, suh, don't chuck out no mo'."

"Dat's jest what make de trouble. Folks is takin' notice of 'em. I seed a white feller jest now what misbehaves hisself like one o' dem probish constables."

"A prohibition officer?"

"He sholy ack like one, squintin' up at yo' window, den movin' roun' to de front an' watchin' yo' do'."

Aunt Cannie had never before intimated that she feared detection in her illicit traffic, and the lawyer's face grew serious as he insisted:

"Then you must tell me where—"

"No, I mustn't. Miss Ellen needs dis wine; an' dere 'tis. But don't throw out no mo' bottles. Fust thing you know, dere'll be some probish 'rivin' here to 'zamine dis house. Huh! Dey can't ketch a suck-egg dog what's got enough gumption to hide de shells."

IT was about ten o'clock. A reading-lamp burned green on Madison's table. In her upper bedroom Ellen had dozed off, dreaming of the castle on the hill, and of the scattered family that might come back. Below-stairs, the puzzled lawyer sat alone, beside his table, muttering to himself: "Suck-egg dog? Hide the shells?" Comfortably lying in a deep chair, he should have been at peace. But he wasn't. The shoemaker's children go barefoot, and though Henry Madison was a most excellent lawyer for other people, his own case stumped him. Where could that priceless wine be coming from? Of course, Aunt Cannie didn't buy it. Neither did she steal. Then who gave it to her? In no nook or corner of his imagination could Madison think of anybody in Vicksburg who had an exhaustless cellar of Baudelot Frères. His pipe went out. The house was deathly still. A book fell from his lap and he started at the noise, then settled down again.

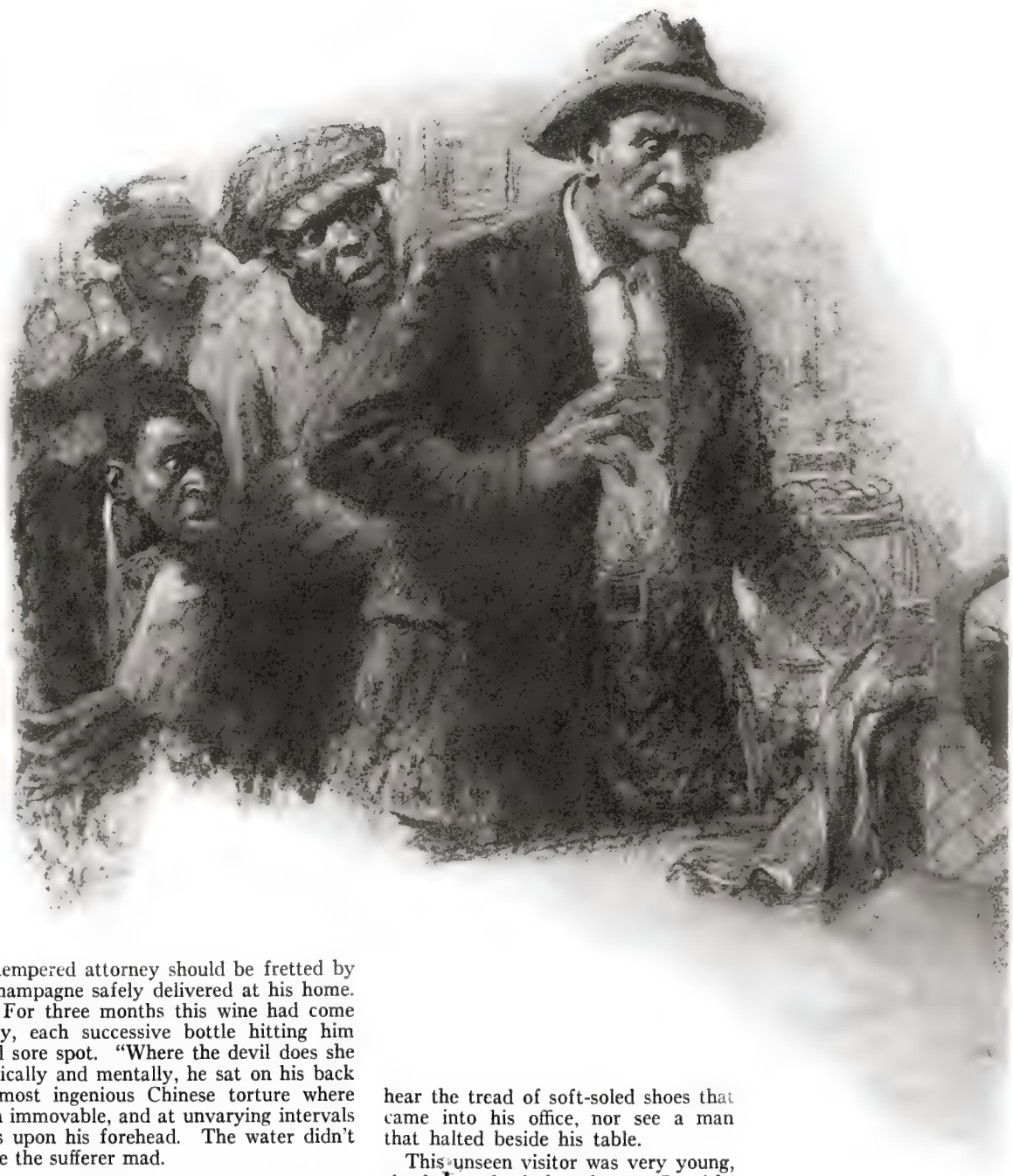
There! He stiffened bolt upright, listening. Something had knocked against the floor—directly under his feet. Again! Another thump that could not be ignored. A stray hog had probably got wedged underneath the house. But no sane legal counselor ever took such precautions to capture a hog, scuffling off his slippers and reaching for a flash-lamp.

Dwellings on the west side of Monroe Street are built along a slope, their fronts level with the sidewalk, while at the rear there's height sufficient for a man to stand underneath. Thence the ground falls away into Castle Hill Bottom.

Holding the flash-lamp ready for use, Madison tiptoed out to the

darkness of his back porch. He heard nothing. Then he moved stealthily down the outside steps, and kicked a pan. The tin clattered into the yard; he heard a scramble, and the patter of running feet. His light flashed. A black figure crossed it like a flying bat. Then somebody tumbled over his back fence.

It all happened quicker than instantaneously. A man had been there. What for? Sock-footed he ran into the back yard and threw his light beneath the house, seeing only the familiar objects, a lawnmower, a barrel of lime and several boxes for kindling. There seemed more boxes than usual, and so he crawled amongst them to investigate, knocking his head against a joist when he straightened up in amazement at finding a case of Baudelot Frères. One—two—three—*eight* cases! He lifted one. It was full, unopened, branded, and bound with metal. Who brought them here? Utterly bewildered, Madison crawled out again, dirty and streaked with spider-webs.



In 1922 Y. D. — this Year of Drouth—no even-tempered attorney should be fretted by finding a consignment of champagne safely delivered at his home. But it annoyed Madison. For three months this wine had come with monotonous regularity, each successive bottle hitting him squarely upon the same old sore spot. "Where the devil does she get it?" In the dark, physically and mentally, he sat on his back steps brooding over that most ingenious Chinese torture where the victim is strapped down immovable, and at unvarying intervals a single drop of water falls upon his forehead. The water didn't hurt, but would finally drive the sufferer mad.

AN attorney's office is no place for mystery. A lawyer's head has no room for romance. The law is not an imaginative profession. Novelties and precedents do not mix. Next morning, like a piece of habit-driven machinery, Madison was going through the motions of opening his mail when the telephone rang.

"Hello? What's that, Lily?" he answered the house-girl. "You say the electricians have come. To examine our wiring? Very well, but they mustn't disturb Miss Ellen. . . . . No. Wait, Lily, *wait*. Keep those men downstairs until I ring you again."

With eight cases of champagne stored in his garret, and eight million suspicions in his mind, Madison rang the Traction Company to learn that they had sent out no inspectors, and knew of none. That cinched it. The men were spies, and he'd catch them. Jamming his hat on very tight, Madison grabbed the phone:

"Hello, Lily, hello! Don't let those fellows get upstairs. I'll be home in five minutes."

"Dey's gone," the house-girl answered. "Dem white men heered me talkin' to you, an' left dis residence in a rush."

The patient Madison turned furious, springing up and starting for police headquarters. He'd nail down responsibility for this outrage, and then— No. He couldn't afford to raise a row and get Aunt Cannie into trouble. He dropped into a chair and stared through the window.

The angry lawyer sat with back toward his door and didn't hear the tread of soft-soled shoes that came into his office, nor see a man that halted beside his table.

This unseen visitor was very young, slender and dark, almost Spanish-looking, and dressed in speckless linen. An American? Yes, but one who bore a distinctly foreign stamp. For some moments he watched the lawyer as if uncertain whether to slip out again; and perhaps the disagreeable sensation of being spied upon caused Madison to whirl so wrathfully that his caller drew back, apologizing.

"Pardon my intrusion, sir." The young man stood hat in hand, half bowing, a figure of boyishly antique courtesy that smiled and said: "I fear you are engaged?"

"Not a bit. Not a bit, sir." Ashamed of his brusqueness, Madison placed a chair. "Wont you have a seat?"

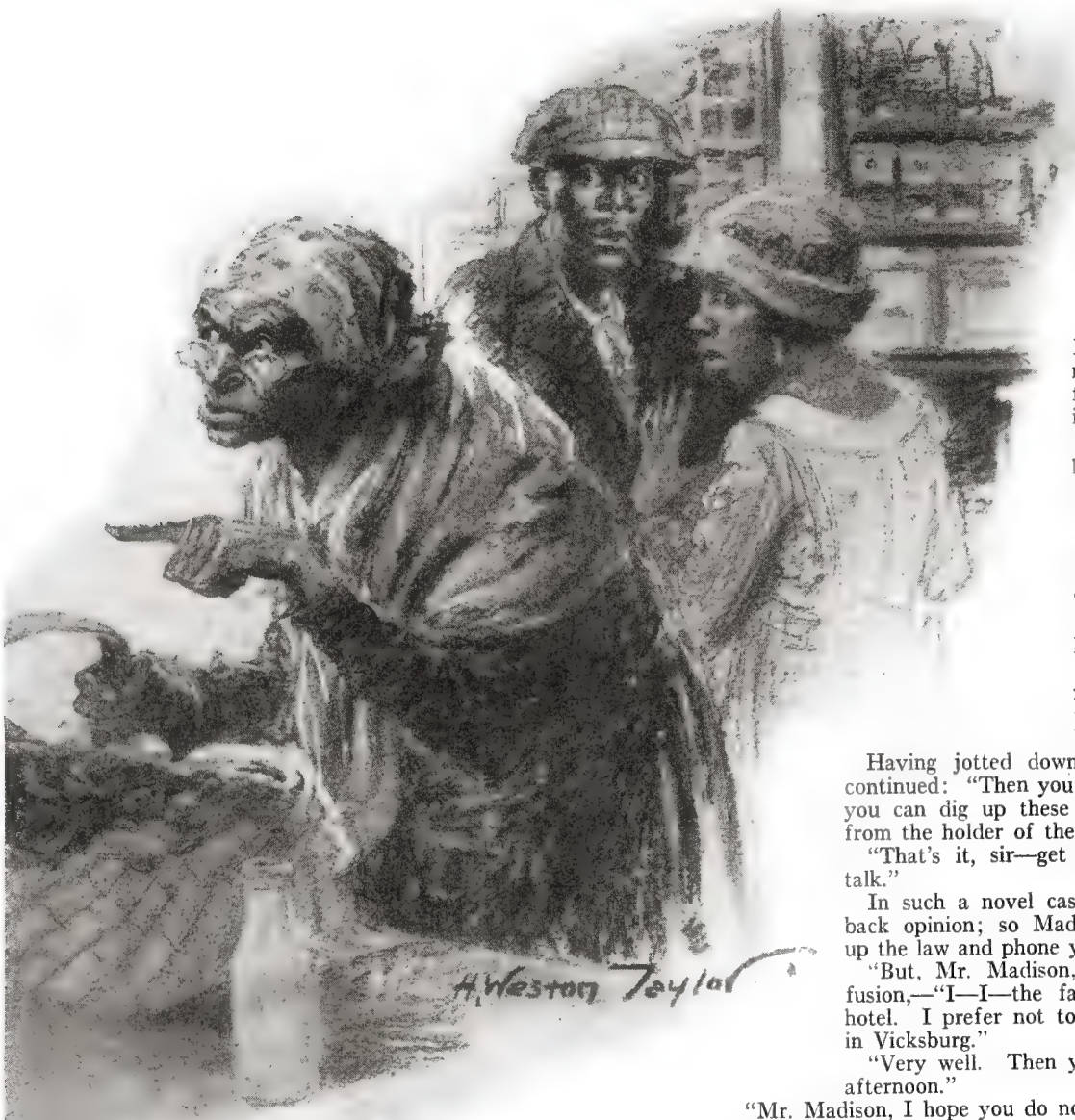
"This is Mr. Madison?" the lad queried in the gentlest of voices, but did not sit.

"Yes sir, I am Henry Madison."

The net of a general practice catches many queer fish, and Madison experienced a twinge of mistrust as his caller stepped warily to the hall door and shut it.

"I crave your indulgence, sir, but—" He also closed the door into a connecting room so that Madison's stenographer might not overhear. "Pardon me, but my affair is *very* confidential."

This excessive secrecy led Madison to think of hidden liquor and fake electricians, and he waited for what might be coming next as the lad introduced himself.



He jumped back with a yell, and every negro in the store heard him cry out: "Snake! Snake! She's got a snake in here!" "No I aint!" Aunt Cannie shouted.

"My name is Balfour, sir, Andrew Balfour. Please forgive my presumption in closing your doors, but buried treasure excites so much curiosity."

"Buried treasure?"

"Yes—the proper legal phrase, I believe, is 'treasure-trove.'" Mr. Andrew Balfour leaned forward and began speaking as if he had prepared every word. First of all, we must keep out of the newspapers. Publicity would ruin us."

"Go on; I am listening." It was all that Madison could think to say.

He was evidently a single-minded person, this young Mr. Balfour, who drew closer and opened the business.

"Permit me to state a hypothetical case: Suppose that R. owns a house, for example in Jackson, Mississippi, during the Civil War, when that city is threatened by Federal troops. He buries some valuables on his property, becomes a refugee and dies. Years afterward his children sell the real estate, which passes through successive transfers. I am the grandson and heir of R. and have lately found among his papers a list of the buried property, giving its exact location. Can I go and dig it up? Is a legal proceeding necessary?"

The lawyer gazed in wonderment upon this boy, so evidently not a business man, who summarized his facts with such conciseness.

"Let me understand you." Madison took up a pencil and made notes. "Your grandfather buried his valuables during the Civil War?"

"Yes sir, mostly heirlooms, portraits and family silver."

"The land now belongs to somebody else?"

"Precisely, sir."

"And these present owners," Madison pursued his inquiry, "do not know that the valuables are secreted on their land?"

"Quite true." The dark head nodded. "I believe that Grandfather's hiding-place has never been discovered—since 1863."

Having jotted down his memoranda, the lawyer continued: "Then you want my advice as to whether you can dig up these heirlooms without permission from the holder of the legal title?"

"That's it, sir—get them before people begin to talk."

In such a novel case no lawyer delivers a horseback opinion; so Madison suggested that he'd look up the law and phone young Balfour at his hotel.

"But, Mr. Madison,"—the lad colored with confusion,—"I—I—the fact is I'm not stopping at a hotel. I prefer not to be known by my true name, in Vicksburg."

"Very well. Then you may call here at five this afternoon."

"Mr. Madison, I hope you do not consider that I am pursuing underhand methods?"

"Not at all—not at all. Possibly a wise precaution." Then the impulse struck Madison to take another wise precaution, as a test of good faith.

"Mr. Balfour, my retainer is one hundred dollars." An acid test!

"Thanks, gratefully." From a foreign-looking wallet his client counted down the cash. "Now I shall leave you, sir, to return at five. Good morning, sir." And Mr. Andrew Balfour bowed himself out like a cavalier from a lady's drawing-room.

THE blue overalls showed up no more in Castle Hill Bottom, but a suit of inconspicuous gray and a pair of owl-eyed spec's climbed a certain dingy staircase on Washington Street, and Mr. Hiram Saugsbee hurried into a back room to confer with the famous "Creeper." For the Creeper was a mighty constable before the law.

"Those bottles are gone," Saugsbee announced. "Every one of 'em!"

"Sure," said the Creeper without taking down his feet from the document-littered desk on which they were propped. "Somebody saw you looking at them bottles, and hid 'em."

With one idle hand the Creeper petted a brindle bulldog that squatted on the floor, volunteering no suggestion that was not solicited and paid for. Business is business. It costs money to feed a kennel of prize bulls. Both officers realized the situation. The imported sleuth couldn't get along without local help, and hated to ask for it. But he'd already shown his hand, and had to go on.

"Who do you suppose moved those bottles?"

"Don't know." Creeper rolled another cigarette.

"Whoever took them away might be the same man that brought them there."

"Likely." The Creeper endorsed but never stirred from his seat. "I can find out, dead easy—providin'."

After the financial arrangements were concluded, Creeper got up and spoke like an oracle.

"Wait here, five minutes." Then the constable and dog went out, making no sound upon the floor.

Criminal negroes complain that the legislature ought to pass some kind of law against the Creeper's wearing rubber heels. In silence he went and in silence he returned, man and dog standing before Saugsbee in the same spraddle-legged attitude.

"Just like I doped it out," the Creeper reported. "A hundred an' fourteen of them bottles was sold this mornin' to a junk dealer on the levee. Boy named 'Nias hauled 'em there in a little wagon. He lives with an old negro woman that I've seen going into Madison's gate, with a basket."

"Same woman that I saw!" Saugsbee clutched at the clue, and warmed up.

"Where'd you see her?" the Creeper asked.

"Last night she followed me out of the Bottom, with a basket on her arm, but didn't go into that house. We'll watch her."

"Sure. Foller every move she makes."

IT was a simple matter to strike Aunt Cannie's trail, which twisted like a corkscrew all over Vicksburg. For hours during the morning, with her basket and stick she prowled through the alleys, bending over ash-barrels and poking among garbage-heaps. Then suddenly she'd flit away like a wasp to Cherry Street, entering the side gates of the rich and the front doors of the poor. As she rarely came out of the same hole wherein she went, it kept four men hustling.

The spry old woman never seemed to get tired, and Saugsbee felt grateful when, at last, she settled herself in a car on the National Cemetery line.

"Catch it—quick!" The Creeper nudged him. "You an' the two niggers! It'll queer the game if she sees me get on."

One United States cop and two local black assistants procured by the Creeper were glad to rest for twenty minutes until Aunt Cannie's car reached the end of its trip, in the sawmill town of Waltersville. There she hopped off like a cricket, crossed the railway tracks, and struck into a long, dusty road that led toward the swamp.

"Jason," the detective questioned one of his negroes, "where can she be going?"

"Dunno, suh," the man answered. "Dere aint nobody stay out dere 'cept fishermens."

They slunk a hundred paces behind and watched her hobbling on with the empty basket. Why carry an empty basket unless it were to bring back something? After a mile or more of wary walking Saugsbee caught a glint of water through the underbrush on his right.

"Jason," he asked, "is that the Mississippi River?"

"No suh. Dere's a whole passel o' dem lakes in here, all tangled up."

Another half-mile, skirting canebrakes and stagnant sloughs, and Aunt Cannie stopped to talk with a shaggy-bearded white man whose shack stood tottering beside a lake. Saugsbee pulled Jason into the bushes and pointed. "Who is that man?" he asked.

"He's a white feller what biles dimunts out o' mussel shells."

"Diamonds? You mean pearls?"

"Mebbe so. Dimunts an' pearls is bofe de same wid me—I aint got none." Jason thought his chance had come to take a long rest, but the old woman scarcely tarried, then moved on, compelling her pursuers to detour and evade the shaggy-bearded fisherman.

When they came into the road, several hundred yards farther on, they sighted their quarry again just as she parted a screen of willows at the water's edge to draw a dugout from its hiding-place. In this long, narrow boat, hewn from a log, Aunt Cannie set her basket and paddled away without a splash.

"Dere now! Got away!" Big-faced Jason grunted, and took his final seat.

It nettled Saugsbee to let a weak old woman slip from him so easily, but he couldn't help himself. A man on foot can't follow a dugout, any more than a dugout can follow a man on foot.

"Scatter, men! See where she goes," Saugsbee ordered, himself running along the lake-bank concealed by the density of its jungle growth.

Diagonally across the water they could now see a sun-blistered shanty-boat, apparently deserted. Beside this sinister craft Aunt Cannie moored her canoe, and entered without call or hail.

"Jason, whose boat is that?" Saugsbee asked.

"Dunno, suh. Jughead Jerry used to have a fishboat in dis lake befo' dey sont him to de pen fer makin' whisky."

"Made his whisky in that boat?"

"Dey 'cused him o' sellin' it dere."

Vigilantly as Saugsbee eyed the craft, he gained no hint of what was happening inside. Presently Aunt Cannie reappeared, stooping out backward through the low doorway, and handling her basket with extreme care. It seemed much heavier when she set it again in the dugout. Taking up her paddle, she started back to where she'd come from.

"Lemme grab her when she lands," Jason suggested; "it mought save a heap o' walkin'."

"Keep hid. We'll see where she takes the stuff."

No one but a dexterous negro could have balanced her basket in such a tricky craft, maintaining her equilibrium by the same instinct that steadies a bicycle. Like crouching panthers, three men eyed her as she headed straight for the bank and drove her dugout's nose into the mud. When she stepped ashore, they saw that the contents of her basket were covered with an old quilt, and beyond the palpable fact that it was heavy, could be certain of nothing else.

"Now!" thought the jubilant detective. "She can't get away with *that* load."

Aunt Cannie showed no desire to get away, but plodded back to the store at Waltersville, where she pushed through a crowd of mill hands and set down her basket on a counter.

"Howdy, Mr. Arenz," she said. "Please suh, lemme have a dime's wuth o' milk."

When Aunt Cannie left her basket unguarded on the counter and went to the refrigerator with Mr. Arenz, Jason saw his opportunity. He shoved among the negroes and took position between the woman and her basket, where his burly body would conceal the maneuver of his white confederate.

Without attracting attention, Saugsbee edged in behind Jason, his eyes ostensibly searching the shelves until he leaned across Aunt Cannie's basket of contraband. The old woman then had both eyes and both hands intent upon a bottle which Mr. Arenz was filling with milk.

No expert pickpocket possessed fingers more sensitive than those which Hiram Saugsbee inserted beneath the quilt that covered the basket. And his trained mind followed their tips as they explored.

At first he felt nothing but soft rags, admirably padded to prevent bottles from breaking, or to muffle their telltale clink. Then his fingers touched something soft, something that felt clammy, something that wriggled and squirmed. He jumped back with a yell, and every negro in the store heard him cry out:

"Snake! Snake! She's got a snake in here!"

"No, I aint," Aunt Cannie shouted. "White man, you leave dat baby 'lone!" And with scant respect for law, she thrust aside the officer.

Any voodoo woman was apt to carry a snake, and curious negroes huddled around as she lifted her quilt and exposed a baby, a black baby, too weak to cry, pitifully emaciated and naked.

"What? What?" Jason's eyes bulged. "What's dat?"

"None o' yo' bizness, nigger!" Aunt Cannie's blazing eyes denounced him. "Dis chil' belongs to a po' sick woman on de fishboat. I'm gwine to nuss it."

A baby was all she had, for Saugsbee watched her as she emptied the basket and remade its squalid bed. Then he got out, ducking his head like a man in a thunderstorm, to escape the wrath that she poured upon him.

"She *does* carry that wine," he insisted to Jason. "We'll catch her yet."

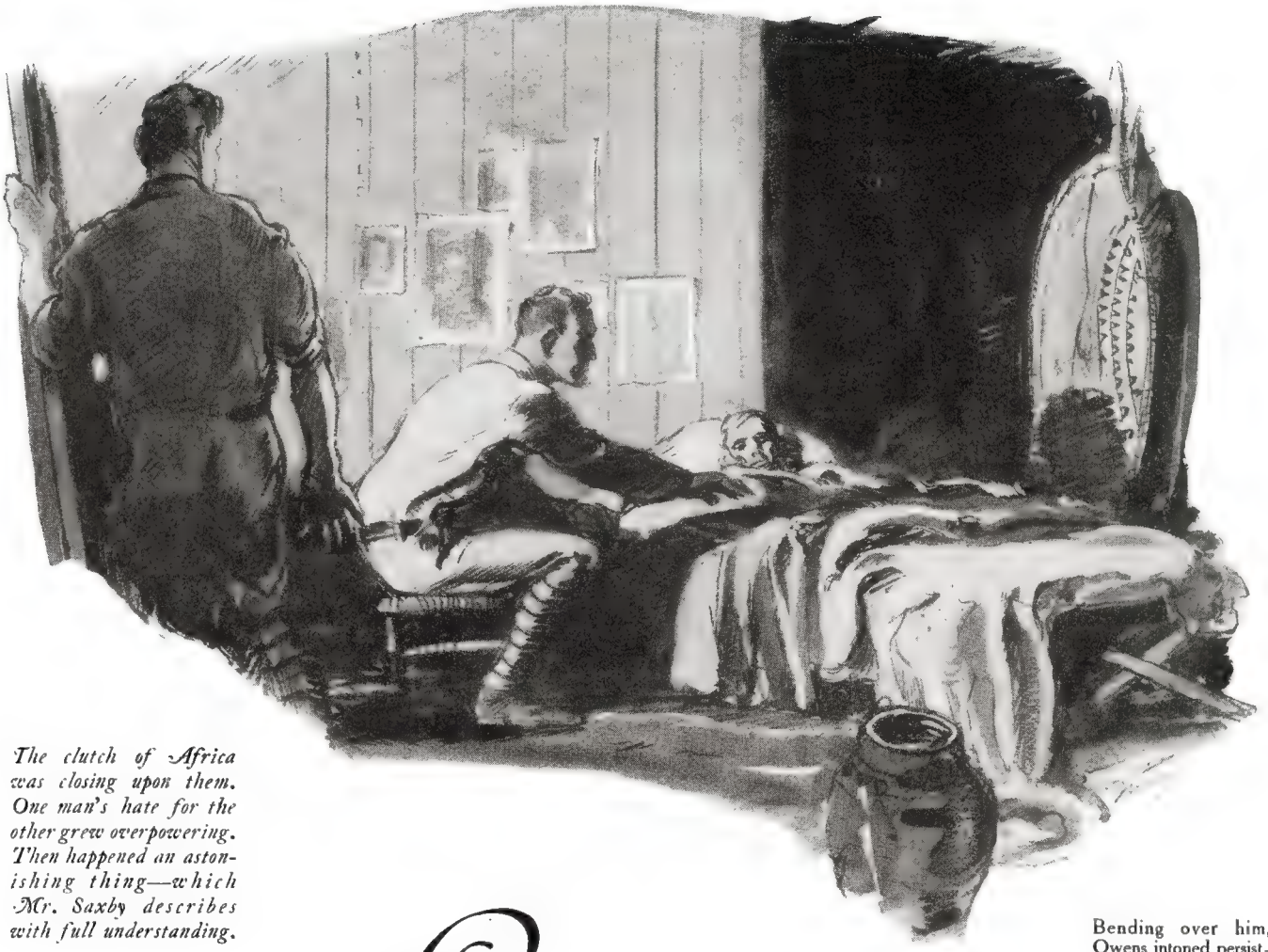
SOMEWHERE around four o'clock Harry Madison was still searching out the technicalities of treasure-trove, with lawbooks scattered about his office, when a racket from the hallway distracted him. He glanced up. Aunt Cannie came flopping through the door, like some bony-legged fowl, sockless, basketless, breathless.

"Hurry, Mr. Harry, hurry!" Madison had never seen her in such a frenzy. "Run *quick!* Dem devilish boys—"

This could mean but one thing. She'd been caught. He grabbed his hat and pushed her to the door, where the crafty old creature remembered all her cunning, and warned him.

"Don't come *wid* me. Foller 'long. Walk easy. Never let *no*body 'spicion you. Castle Hill!" *(Continued on page 126)*

Illustrated by C. B. Falls



The clutch of Africa was closing upon them. One man's hate for the other grew overpowering. Then happened an astonishing thing—which Mr. Saxby describes with full understanding.

Bending over him, Owens intoned persistently: "Lampert is lost—lost out in the Südd."

Conquest

By CHARLES SAXBY

"YOU'VE certainly got your nerve, Owens," said Hayford. Rocking in the canvas canoe between the papyrus stalks, Owens glanced up at his companion. If there were an inept remark to be made, you could trust Hayford to make it, he thought. Knocking the ashes from his pipe, he stowed it silently away, his only answer being a shrug from his stocky young shoulders.

The sun was setting, dropping over the level horizon of the Südd like a ball of still intolerable fire, painting a world of red and black. Red sky, save where the swift tropical night was already gathering its veils; red dapples on the water channels; and against it the black tracery of swamp palms and tasseled reeds. That was all, and go where you would for a hundred miles, there would be nothing added or taken away.

"I hate to have you go," Hayford was continuing; "but then, of course—Lampert—"

At the name, Lampert himself flashed on the screen of Owens' mind, etched by an acid of irritation: long, cool, immaculate, gazing out on life from the doubled pedestal of the Lampert fortune and his own record. The sort of fellow who seems to expect things always to stand aside, that he may have his will. But it was difficult to picture the Südd as standing aside for anyone. A horrible place to be lost in; one could go on for weeks—if one lasted that long—paddling up and down that water-maze. And then, of late— Owens grasped the canoe paddle.

"I've *got* to go after him," he said with grim determination.

That was an explosion, and from his place on the bank, Hayford stared down.

"I didn't realize that you liked Lampert as much as that."

It was on Owens' lips to snap back, "I don't, and that's just why," but a glance at Hayford's round, solemn face silenced him. Hayford was a perfectly good little chap, but there were things which it was hopeless to expect him to understand—all the more so when one hardly understood them oneself. That sort of sensitive rot had no place here in Africa, of course; yet somehow it seemed almost born of the place. One would have thought that so much solitude and savagery, as of a world still raw from the kick of creation, would have taken one out of one's little two-by-four self. But instead, it seemed more to shut one in, as if those vast spaces of papyrus marsh were simply painted on the walls of some solitary confinement. He had come to hate the Südd, that inland sink into which a quarter of a continent poured unnamed rivers.

In the last few days they had come to suspect that the Südd harbored more than mere loneliness. The signs were slight and in reflection only, as a swaying curtain may hint of one lurking behind it. A thin column of smoke rising from below the swamp horizon; a flock of birds wheeling upward to flap distractedly as if above a rifled nesting place; and once, a long-dead hippo floating bloatedly by.

"If we have to sit up,

Hayford spoke again, in that masculine ritual which demands making light of things.

"Of course, you'll find him easily enough."

"Sure," Owens answered, busy with gloves and mosquito-veil.

"He had Sammaad and his compass; I don't see how he got lost."

Owens was silent; whether he *could be* lost or not, the fact remained that Lampert *had not returned.*

"You ought not to go alone though," Hayford went on. "Where are the canoe niggers?"

"All hidden away somewhere."

Hayford whistled in dismay. "That looks bad," he said, and glanced about as though expecting to see black forms skulking amongst the reeds. "You'll probably find him over at Mela Lot's, though. I'd go myself, but I simply cannot leave Marquand."

Owens glanced up at the house on the bank above them. Reared on stilts, with its outer shell of wire screening, it looked like a giant meat-safe. That was exactly what it was, a meat-safe into which, at each darkness, they packed their tender flesh for refuge from the winged poison cloud arising from the marsh.

And in one of its barren cubicles, Marquand was fighting perhaps his last battle with this Africa which had been his lifelong passion and defeat.

Marquand! Even now Owens always thrilled a little to the name. It was the old explorer's books which had been his boyish Bible of adventure: "The Mountains of the Moon," "Beyond the Quong." The glorious hours he had spent, hidden away among the baking boulders of a California river-bed, devouring those pages! Now the threads of their lives had met and meshed in one of those strange patternings of Fate, for Marquand was capitalizing his name and experience for a block of Owens Papyro Process stock.

But the perpetual ill luck, the curious destiny which always seemed to have snatched from Marquand any tangible rewards of his tremendous expeditions, was still with him. Owens thought of the moments just passed up in Marquand's room: Walls of bare wood painted red by the sunset, a "death-watch" spider ticking remorselessly away somewhere up in the iron roof. Marquand himself, stretched on the cot, his bronze face oddly blued, the stubble standing out upon it like a moldy efflorescence. A fallen colossus, he looked, an overthrown Memnon awaiting the touch of a different dawn. There had been something uncanny in their efforts to rouse him; it was too much like trying to galvanize a corpse into some horrid simulacrum of life.

He heard their questions; his eyes showed that when at last he opened them. One could imagine all that was left of him, queerly shrunken, flitting uneasily in the corridors of his own frame. Bending over him, Owens had intoned persistently:

"Lampert is lost—lost out in the Südd—"

The eyes had misted at that, for from the first it was Lampert to whom Marquand had been most drawn. Even so, the question had to be repeated many times before he spoke, the tones coming hollowly as if from some pent place.

"Lampert—the Südd—good God!"

we may as well make a night of it," Owens heard himself saying in a sort of wild lightness.

That seemed all; Hayford had motioned for silence as he laid a finger on the sick man's wrist. A fold of Marquand's sleeping-jacket had fallen back from the laboring cage of his ribs. Then his voice had come again, with a flicker of his old command:

"The Arukai—known for days—go—go to Mela Lot—"

A glance, blightingly clear, as though it looked out, with a poison of knowledge, from some place where past and future alike were seen as one futility. A gasp, leaving a single word as the sum of a lifetime's bafflement:

"Africa—"

Africa! Owens thought that he caught something of what that word had meant. Africa! He seemed to feel it all about him as an actual presence, potent, subtly inimical, marshaling its forces against them. Then Hayford's voice recalled him.

"You'll find him over at Mela Lot's, all right," the little doctor was saying, as though he imagined repetition would make a thing true.

"I don't see why he'd be hanging about over there," Owens answered, and Hayford stirred uneasily as if at a rending of the decencies.

"Oh, you never know what a chap will do." He bent, extending a hand. "So long, old man, good luck!"

Three strokes of the paddle, and the station was hidden, leaving only a glimpse of its cut bank glaring rawly out, the first of those gashes by which civilization eats its way into the wild. Left alone for a week, even that would be gone, overcome by the terrible fecundities all about. A thousand miles of it, stretching in every direction, coming to its last grip in the Südd itself.

They had meant to change all that, but instead it was that which seemed to be changing them. One could almost feel it sneaking in at the back of one's brain, spreading depression and vague apprehensions like a fever mist. A constant, concealed irritation with everything and each other, a distorted vastness of one's own ego and its silly "problems."

It was probably that which caused most of his trouble with Lampert, Owens thought; but then again, the fellow was—oh, hell! He tilted it off his mind in a healthy reaction, and bent again to his paddling.

It was so ghastly lonely, he would be glad when he got to Mela Lot's.

Mela Lot—there was something for you, a bit of the real old Africa; an arrant old slave-raider who for fifty years had stamped the continent from Lake Rudolph to the Nyassa, with his kettledrums, crescent flag, and a band of hard-bitten niggers. Little by little they had been pushed back to those regions where the white man's dominance was little more than a splash of color on a school map. It was shortly after Owens' own arrival in the Südd that they had come storming their way up the Nzuri, twenty boatloads of them, with Mela Lot himself in the lead, parched and wizened to the semblance of a mummy. What that man must have seen in his time! Yet it all ended in this last refuge on a swamp islet. And even that would end as soon as the Company's great floating reaping-machines arrived and began eating their way through the papyrus.

The solitudes of the Südd, to be made up into print paper for the daily journals—this black hole of utterly material darkness turned into a medium of mind! There was something inspiring in that thought.

They had warned Mela Lot of what was to come, picturing the clamor of those huge machines, telling of the deepened, straightened waterways along which steamers would tow strings of piled barges down to the reduction plant to be built on the Nzuri banks. But the time-worn old ruffian, blinking his lashless lids, had merely motioned to the swamp all about them.

"Me be t'ink no."

That was all he would say, but it came with the ring of things known only to himself. He seemed to rely upon the place as a last stand of that old, old Africa, relentlessly bent upon remaining just itself.

Owens would know how to find Lampert, though; the Südd had few secrets from him. He bent once more to his paddle; two hours to the island—he must be nearly there.

By George, he was there now. But how—

This was the place, all right, unmistakable by the bluish nigger reek upon the night. But where were the fires, the voices, the strident songs?

The world was all black now, save for the water channels reflecting back the grayish star-sheen. Over in the east was the pale promise of a moon, and against it the trees rose gauntly, like those of some island of the dead. With hushed paddle, Owens groped in toward the bank, almost coming to grief upon an overturned, half-sunken boat. As he leaped to the shore under the added darkness of the trees, he found himself stumbling among a litter of things—cooking pots, fiber beds, water-jars, axes, strewn wildly, already touched with the queer squalor which overtakes things abandoned.

No light nor presence in the huts of cane thatch, and yet, from the still-glowing ashes of the fires, *(Continued on page 112)*

The appealing and skillfully told love-story of Mary Matters, of whom the Harlem highbrow remarked: "Gee—get the Winged Victory over there—the one with a swell shape but no face!"

Illustrated by Edward Ryan

"So was Jim and I engaged," returned Bella. "You aint kidding yourself that means anything now, are you?"

The Winged Victory

By J. F. Natteford

THE fifth annual ball and shirt-waist dance of the Francis X. McGonigle Association was held at Klopfer's Harlem Casino, on a Wednesday evening of course, in May. Mack himself was there, resplendent in the better of the two dress suits in evidence. The other was worn by Buck McGee, a solidly muscular plumber's helper. Its lapel proudly displayed a badge, consisting principally of a three-inch portrait advertisement of the club's founder and celebrity. Under this was a little tag that could be drawn out and replaced at pleasure. Tonight the tag read "*Master of Ceremonies;*" on Saturday night it would read "*Sergeant at Arms.*" Both titles signified, in the vulgate, "*bouncer.*"

The dance in progress was a Virginia reel. Instead of following the country fashion of calling the changes, Buck used a referee's whistle, metropolitan style. Between blasts he held the center of the floor, alert for the friction that characterized the social events of the McGonigles, conscious of his dignity and responsibility.

During such an interval he heard a member inquire of his partner:

"Wonder why that old maid always hangs around our rackets, Fan?"

The words were spoken loudly, accompanied by the jerking of a significant thumb toward the solitary occupant of the row of folding chairs that encircled the stuffy hall.

Fan looked her escort in the eye.

"Say," she demanded, "aint it never occurred to you that maybe she comes to have a good time?"

Fan was a "cute little kid," who could "get away with anything."

As the couple whirled past, Buck turned and saw Mary Matters. She was then about twenty-five, with her unloveliness of face ripened to perfect maturity. No beautiful countenance could have held the eye half so long or so imperatively as hers, for no grace or bloom could ever have been so arresting as the multitude of freckles that covered her pale nose and cheeks, or so strange as the evasively neutral bleached red of her hair.

Miss Matters presented, moreover, an arresting and pathetic incongruity. Just imagine, if you can, the gracious contour and harmonious modeling of the Venus of Milo, corseted by Earne's Department Store and gowned by a Bargain Basement. Such was Mary's figure. If architecture be frozen music, it was a warm, living rhapsody of flowing curves that melted and lost themselves in one another without ever failing to suggest the lithe strength and purity of line that speaks from ancient eloquent marble.

While Buck studied her, she looked upon the whirling skirts and clicking patent leathers with the appraisal of a connoisseur. Her eyes lacked eloquence to express her longing, but he saw that her feet kept furtive time to the music, and not even her cheap stockings could hide the hungry appeal of her ankles.

"Bet that kid could learn to dance," he thought.

The number ended with a blare of brass and an explosion of the drummer's entire equipment. Mary rose in response to the signal of her friend and roommate, Bella Conklin, who beckoned from across the floor. Then, seeing Buck absorbed in the study of life's irony as exemplified in her person, she stopped to shoot a defensively hostile stare at him.

She stood for a moment, poised on a forward step, half of her body's rounded beauty outlined by the tight skirt and bodice of the period, the other half concealed in the vagrant folds of a cheap net scarf.

"Gee," snickered a Harlem highbrow, "get the Winged Victory over there!"

"Whaddye mean, Winged Victory?" drawled his partner with a giggle and a baby stare.

"You know that Greek statue," he explained, pointing, "the one with a swell shape but no face. Get me?"

Most of Mary's wonderful grace was but the physical expression

of mental control; and Mary had left behind with short skirts the ability to hear any reference to her uncomeliness. But her eye had been upon Buck's, and what she saw broke through her painfully acquired self-control. He was hurt; he thought she had been wounded.

Mary's lips quivered. He had been the first man to reveal sympathy, and it weakened her more than derision. Her eyes dimmed, and Buck saw the brightness flow into their corners. Turning, he strode to the side of the offender.

"The lady hoid you make that crack just now," he said to him curtly, touching his arm. "It's up to you to square yourself with her."

There are times when the young tiger of the metropolitan jungle is more jealous of his dignity than usual. Certainly the most auspicious occasion for administering a lesson is not when the young woman of his choice hangs upon his arm.

After a preliminary survey of Buck, the highbrow shifted his weight and shook his left shoulder gently. Without knowing why, as instinctively as a cat turns homeward, his girl removed her encumbering hand from his wrist. Not until then did he demand belligerently:

"Where d'you git that stuff?"

Apparently he was not so meek a Clarence after all. But that first touch upon the arm, seemingly made only to enforce attention, had been part of a calculation which Buck's duties required him to make frequently and accurately.

Mary blanched as she heard his ultimatum.

"You can step outside with me quiet, or be bounced off the floor for insultin' a lady. Which is it?"

The other turned to his girl.

"Get your things an' meet me at the corner," he ordered. "After I wipe up this guy, I don't want to hafta clean his gang when I come back for you."

Without further words the men slipped quickly through the swinging doors of the Casino.

Beside the two young women concerned, only Bella Conklin, who had been watching the scene with her beady blue eyes, saw them go. She promptly sauntered across the hall.

"Mary," she asked, marveling, "did Buck McGee ast that fella outside on account of you?"

"I—I'm afraid he did, Bella."

"M-a-r-y!"

Bella's exclamation was pregnant with a new standard of values, a tardy recognition of essential sisterhood. Mary felt the alienation of a sudden equality, and they stood like strangers, Mary flushed and proud of head, while Bella studied her with hard, inquisitive eyes, as though seeking some physical evidence to dispel a last lingering doubt. It seemed so impossible that Mary should have attracted the attention of man!

The spell was broken by the return of Buck, breathing heavily, but bearing no mark upon his leanly solemn features.

"Let me introduce my friend," thrust in Bella cleverly. "Miss Matters, Mr. McGee."

"Pleased to meet you," mumbled Mary, extending a warm hand.

"How do?" Buck responded with the suavity and ease engendered by rank among the McGonigles. "The gentleman I went out with sends his apologies."

Mary felt the hot tide flood up under her freckles. Conscious of Buck's scrutiny, she held her cheap fan across her bare throat. Bella and her partner had tactfully trotted away, and embarrassment gripped both Mary and Mr. McGee.

"Dance?"

"Yes, thanks."

She slipped gratefully into his solid embrace. After circling the floor once, Buck admitted audibly that she was one little dancer. His own steps were executed with the neatness and effortless

Mary caught herself thinking cynically that it would be a scandal if the "goings-on" were not justified by at least one engagement.

grace of an athlete, but Mary was that rarest of women, a perfect dancer and a perfect partner. She took up the choppy steps of the tango and played with them, inventing, discarding and improving upon new combinations, while Buck remained a well-taught pupil of a Third Avenue dancing-school.

At the intermission Mary looked shyly up to his face, half hoping for commendation and half fearing to find that conceited resentment of another's superiority so common among the Macks and Bills of the Association.

"Kid," he asked with easy gallantry, "where did you get those hoofs?"

To the uninitiated this might not seem complimentary. But Mary knew! And her happiness would have been complete had her face permitted a roguish reply in formula:

"Listen, dearie: if you kid me like that, I'm liable to forget myself and kiss you!"

But she could only look away and try to imagine herself as those others—and then the music began again.

The gayety of the exhilarating movement cleared her cheeks. In the intimacy of Buck's arms, her face was out of his eyes' focus, and her smoothly modeled shoulders and the marble column that supported her freckled mask were comparative assets. All this was not consciously realized by her, for she was neither wise nor clever—but a woman.

And Buck knew only that he enjoyed the odd humor of her demurely experimental steps, and the sensation of holding within his grasp something slight, buoyant and vibrantly alive, furnishing the complement to his negatively solid strength.

When the number was finished he lapsed into silence, resentful that the highest form of self-expression he had ever achieved might be ended by the stopping of a semiprofessional band. And in Mary's eyes something struggled which, had it gained expression, would have been painfully like the look of a hungry kitten fed at last.

So they danced again, and yet again. The McGonigles were unusually peaceful and there were no quarrels to disturb Buck. Although Mary felt Bella's hard blue eyes upon her many times, her chum held conspicuously aloof. Finally, in the perfect mood of half enjoying pleasure present, half regretting pleasure past, Mary and Buck floated through the wistful strains of "Home, Sweet Home."

When the band turned to their unfinished beers, Mary was thrilled to find Bella already gone.

"That's what I call real white," thought she.

It was also a tacit compliment, and she must show herself worthy of it.

"What do you know about that?" she asked in innocent surprise. "My friend has gone home already—I don't see her anywhere."

Buck responded with the usual: "Guess I'd better see you to your corner, then."

Mary hurried into her worsted coat, snatched up her lumpy muff, and found him waiting by the door. Outside, in the air of early spring, he lifted his elbow and she slipped her hand under it. They walked in silence to the car, for she awaited his pleasure as to the first word.

There was no vacant seat in the trolley, but Buck caught the eye of a scrawny youth and held it. The ensuing contest of wills was decided in half a minute, and Mary dropped into the lad's seat with a satirical word of thanks. Then she flashed an intimate little smile up to Buck, letting him know that she knew how reluctant the offering had been, and how terrible must have been Buck's telepathic compulsion.

Experience or advice could not have taught her how to do such a thing, and this was her first man. Yet she had absorbed the byplay, and conveyed her understanding and appreciation to the victor as naturally as a girl-child mothers her first doll. And Mary could never have realized the importance of her demonstration to Buck that between them there might be understanding and appreciation without words.

The streets were deserted when they alighted, and the eerie sensation of knowing that many people slept near by, removed from them by only a foot of brick wall, seemed to radiate from the silent houses and blank windows. They sensed the loneliness of their being awake; she clung to his arm, and he felt the softness and warmth of her through his sleeve.

Then, at her doorway, Mary was suddenly face to face with the problem of maneuvering their next meeting. At a loss for words, she fumbled for her key and unlatched the door. Finally she spoke:

"Bella must be in already. The gas in the hall's out."

She stood halfway into the dark cavern of the vestibule, her pathetic achievement of ugliness and archness veiled by the sympathetic night, and Buck sensed only the invitation of her throaty voice.

"She always puts it out before she says good-night to her Jim."

Groping, Buck found her hand and stepped into the vestibule.

When Mary tripped upstairs half an hour later, she had made an appointment to go to the Fifth Annual Reception and Civic Ball of Local 49, International Union of Journeyman Plumbers, Gas- and Steamfitters. She had graduated from the class of *triste* merry-makers whose presence is forecast by the cryptic phrase: "*Extra Lady, 15c.*"

But that had almost nothing to do with the real reason why she floated without effort up the tedious flights.

Upon her throbbing lips she bore the accolade of womanhood.

He struck feebly at her. With a catch in her breath, she ran.

THE months that followed invested Mary's figure with a new dignity, and there was almost the dawn of a gleam in her pale eyes. She found love sweet, unknowing that it begets love; she delighted to caress, unconscious that she engendered the desire for more caresses. The only concession she made to her lack of charm was to darken the

"How do?" Buck responded. "The gentleman I went out with sends his apologies."

light in the little nook that had once been exclusively Bella's; and then she honestly believed that it was cosier to sit in the half darkness, speaking little and sighing much.

Even among his laconic friends Buck was accounted taciturn. Not that he was without ideas, for once, at the end of one of Bella's tattling anecdotes, he read her a lesson.

"I'm glad I'm a fella," he remarked. "They let a guy mind his own business. They don't squeal on each other."

He stopped and studied his shoe with knit brows.

Bella pursed her lips for a flippant reply, but subsided into awe at the mere bulk of Buck's concentration.

"If I throw mud on Tony Percardi's flowers," he said finally, "he can't sell 'em. An' I've got to go an' wash my hands. Think it over, kid."

"It's a lady's business to look out for herself," snapped Bella. "I'm goin' out."

And Mary indicated that she was very much impressed by Buck's cleverness in achieving the removal of an element that disturbed the privacy of his wooing.

Buck's taciturnity became absolute silence when Mary spoke of the love they had discovered. Yet he probably thought more upon it than she did. For hours he sometimes sat beside her, holding her soft hand in his hard one, pondering painfully upon this strange nobility they had evoked from human dust.

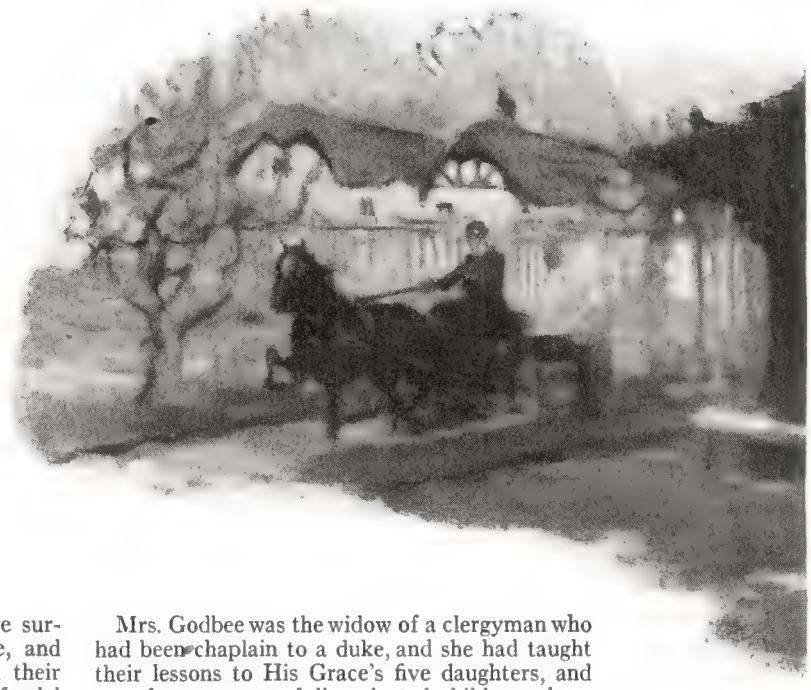
When Buck slipped a microscopic diamond upon her finger, she was startled to find herself atremble. Probably this was due, wholly or in part, to her fear of losing Buck before he should become hers absolutely. There would *(Continued on page 132)*

Oakfield House

By

ARCHIBALD MARSHALL

The ancient estates of England are being cut up into truck patches; great country houses are offered "to let" by impoverished noblemen. Here is the very human story of such a house, by one of the most distinguished living English writers, the Anthony Trollope of our day.



THOSE who were privileged to visit among the Best Families of Oakfield fifty years or so ago found them still shaking their heads at the coming of the railway. But there were some who held that the most serious blow was struck at the proud seclusion of their village when Lord Tonbridge sold Oakfield House a few years later.

There are other London suburbs within the four-mile radius, now submerged in the tide of brick and slate and asphalt, that were quiet villages within living memory. The rich merchants and bankers who lived about them were surrounded by many of the pleasures of a country existence, and could boast that no roof or chimney was to be seen from their windows. But there were few which possessed the almost feudal air of Oakfield, where my lord and my lady lived in the big house to which all the other houses looked up, drew agricultural rents, gave red cloaks to the children at Christmas-time, drove to church every Sunday morning in a handsome equipage to listen to a sermon by the clergyman whom my lord had presented to the living, and exercised their rights of nomination to the Tonbridge almshouses.

A word must be said about these almshouses, which remained a source of pride to Oakfield long after it had lost every other vestige of its old-time quality. They had been built and endowed by the first lord in the seventeenth century, for the reception and maintenance of six poor gentlewomen of this and the neighboring parishes. You can see them still standing in the busy suburban street, a long line of Jacobean stone, latticed windows, red roofs, carved doorways and chimney-stacks, behind their little gardens bright with flowers, and topped by some fine elms which grow on the well-kept lawn that backs them—a very haunt of ancient peace and refuge in the midst of all the modern bustle. Each poor gentlewoman had two good rooms of her own, and a sufficient allowance to support the gentility to which all of them clung so pathetically. Gentility was a tremendous thing among these poor women left stranded by the ebb of life, and the terms of the original bequest enabled them to hold up their heads among their neighbors, even though in the receipt of charity.

Oakfield House was thus more than a mere nobleman's villa within an easy drive of London. It was a nobleman's country seat, though not one of the most resplendent. It was a large stone mansion standing in a fine park, with home farm adjoining; and it was possible to say, as most people who went there did say, that it might be a hundred miles away from a town. So, when it came to be sold, it conferred a dignity upon its purchaser that would not have gone with many a house of more magnificence.

This dignity was acquired by Mrs. Godbee, together with the house, the gardens, the park, and the buildings of the home farm; and nobody could have made better use of it.

Mrs. Godbee was the widow of a clergyman who had been chaplain to a duke, and she had taught their lessons to His Grace's five daughters, and to a few more carefully selected children whose parents basked in the radiance surrounding the ducal residence. She had, in fact, conducted a little school in her husband's rectory, and conducted it so well that the Duchess, who, rather in advance of her time, took an interest in women's education, kept her daughters entirely in the country during the ordinary school terms, for the benefit of Mrs. Godbee's teaching.

When her husband died, Mrs. Godbee was ready with her plans for starting a super-ladies' school. None but girls of the most unimpeachable quality were to be educated at it. They were to be surrounded by all the spacious amenities that they would enjoy in their own homes; and they were to have the best education that money, and Mrs. Godbee, could provide.

The Duchess interested herself in the scheme, and lent her youngest daughter, as ground-bait, for a year. She persuaded the Duke to finance the undertaking. He was a sporting, kind-hearted nobleman, and it amused him to devise means of advancing it. It was he who saw what a valuable factor toward success Oakfield House would be, when it came into the market at just the right time. It was near enough to London for the young ladies to be taken to classical concerts, picture-galleries, lectures and the more discreet kind of amusements, and to draw upon the metropolitan scholastic reservoir for supplementary masters; and yet a genuine country house, known to the elect, with its own park and with so many other things of its own which girls' schools at that time were content to do without, that no wonder the rich but untitled herd were soon tumbling over one another to gain such advantages for their daughters. They would share them with the offspring of one duke, two earls, one viscount and three barons, —this was the bag of the opening term,—besides other children of high descent whose names spoke volumes to the initiate.

Oakfield House was a success from its scholastic start. Though it no longer housed the acknowledged leaders of Oakfield society, Mrs. Godbee immediately took her place in the sociabilities of the Best Families, and kept it. She was a woman of intellect and

Illustrated by Robert W. Stewart

John would trot along the drive without so much as a roving eye at the young nymphs, although he was intensely aware of them.

character, and did well by the children committed to her charge. She could have doubled her numbers at any time during the twenty years in which she held the reins, but she kept to her original thirty, and refused on any consideration to take day-scholars.

During those twenty years the side of the little town where Oakfield House stood was still unspoiled, with just now and then a pasture or an arable field converted into another large garden for another comfortable, well-built house.

If all Oakfield had been allowed to grow upon *those* lines, said the Best Families, who mostly lived upon this side, there would have been nothing to grumble at, considering that *some* change must be expected, with St. Paul's Cathedral only four miles distant, and the train-journey to the City done in twenty minutes. But upon the other side there was building going on all the time. Oakfield was becoming a populous place, and it was no longer possible to know all your neighbors at least by sight.

By the time Mrs. Godbee died, Oakfield was generally recognized as a London suburb, and not as a country place near London. Her school lists were still salted with aristocratic names, but these no longer provided the bulk of the reading. The young ladies who took horse-exercises found their rides increasingly limited, as the country around was eaten up bit by bit; and it was not possible now to imagine yourself a hundred miles from London, even inside the park of Oakfield House, for roofs and chimneys could be seen through the trees on all sides.

Yet Mrs. Godbee's daughter succeeded to a valuable property. There was still virtue in the mansion and the park and the farm, and the list of titled referees in the prospectus. If the aristocracy now preferred to send its daughters to school elsewhere than in a growing suburb, there were still plenty of people willing to pay the high fees demanded by Miss Godbee, who kept up the tradition, if not so much the actuality, of exclusiveness inaugurated by her mother.

Miss Godbee had been educated up to the last limit, with a view of joining her mother in managing the school and eventually succeeding her, always supposing she did not marry in the meantime. She did not marry, for reasons which need not concern us, and after imbibing learning at Oakfield House until she was nineteen, and spending a year in Paris, a year in Dresden, and a year in Florence, she began her life work. At the age of thirty-five she took up the sole rule, upon the death of her mother.

AT the end of five years the atmosphere of Oakfield House had changed. If there was one word that Mrs. Godbee would have rejected as describing her school, it was "fashionable." Under Miss Godbee it was best described as fashionable. A great deal of attention was paid to dress: Mrs. Godbee had encouraged a spotless simplicity. Manners and deportment were taught: Mrs. Godbee had inculcated unselfishness and consideration for others, and left manners to take care of themselves. Luxury had crept in: Mrs. Godbee's regimen had been almost Spartan, though everything she had given her pupils had been of the best. In a word, Mrs. Godbee had put education first and flourished on it: Miss Godbee put fashion first, and declined.

At the end of ten years the school-list was no longer sown broadcast. There was not a name in it that would have attracted a parent of the class that had intrusted its girls to Mrs. Godbee. But Oakfield House was still "fashionable," and still full.

Miss Godbee attributed the change in the quality of her girls to the change in Oakfield itself, by this time connected with London by miles of streets, which also ran long past it, and on either side. It had become submerged. The old marketplace was no longer recognizable for what it had been. A few of the old shops still stood their ground, but all the residential houses had disappeared. Electric trams clanked up and down the busy "boulevard," which had been an elm-shaded garden-bordered lane when Mrs. Godbee had first come to Oakfield House. The greater part of the park had been turned into a public garden, so that the young ladies still looked out of their windows upon trees and grass; but they also looked out upon a large number of their fellow-creatures,

and did not enjoy privacy when they played their games in the space that was left to them. For the fence that divided them from the vulgar herd was easy to be scaled by an active urchin, and no vigilance on the part of the park-keeper could keep it clear of applauding but derisive onlookers.

Miss Godbee often talked of removing her school into the country, and if she had done so in good time, it might have retained something of its exceptional quality, which it gradually lost as the years went by and rural Oakfield disappeared. But Miss Godbee was less of a business woman than her mother, and eventually found herself paying twice as much rent for the house and five acres of ground as her mother had paid for house, farm and forty acres. And there were liabilities besides, which made it impossible for her to get out with any money at all left over.

It was at this point that, becoming seriously alarmed, she reduced her fees for boarders and opened the exclusive doors of Oakfield House to day-scholars.

IF the rapid development of Oakfield brought decay to the fortunes of Miss Godbee, there were others of its inhabitants who greatly profited by it.

When Mrs. Godbee opened her school, in the quiet country place that Oakfield then was, she conferred great benefit upon the local tradespeople. His lordship had provided good custom during the few months of the year in which he was in residence, but it was nothing to compare with that of Mrs. Godbee, ministering to the healthy appetites of her thirty young ladies, and of all the people who taught them or waited upon them. It was an auspicious day for John Flitch, family butcher, when Mrs. Godbee bestowed her patronage upon him, passing by his more important rival, whose insistence upon his right to go on serving Oakfield House had displeased the autocratic dame.

Young John Flitch had taken very kindly to his father's business, and liked especially the duties which fell to his share of calling on customers for their orders, and afterward fulfilling them. He enjoyed his cheery word at the back doors of the houses he called at, and had many friends among the maids of the larger houses and the mistresses of the smaller. It was mostly the smaller houses in the newer parts of Oakfield that he served, and he was greatly envious of the two assistants of Barrow & Co., who carried their baskets on horseback, while he trudged it with his.

Envy, however, had not made a serious mark upon his nature before the great windfall of Mrs. Godbee's custom changed his outlook altogether. His father firmly grasped this gift of fortune, and determined to build still greater things upon it. He bought two ponies at a handsome price, and a cart shining with varnish and gold leaf, upon which his name and style were emblazoned. In the fresh morning hours, John Flitch, Junior, rode round to collect orders. An hour or two later he drove his second pony in the flashing cart to deliver them. Dressed in clean butcher's blue, with his dark uncovered head well pomaded, he was the type and image of dashing young butchers, exulting in naked speed, whether mounted in the saddle or seated aloft on his high cart, whistling and singing out of the joy of his exuberant heart, and an object to be cherished in many a print-covered female bosom, as he clattered along by the lilacs and laburnums of the new suburban streets, or sent the mud flying in the country lanes.

For with the mark of prosperity shown by this wise investment in horseflesh, his father's business increased rapidly, and within a year John Flitch & Son was making quite as much money as Barrow & Co., and likely to make still more.

John Flitch, Junior, never whistled or sang as he passed through the lodge gates of Oakfield House, and rode or drove through the park to the back regions of the mansion. He was still under the sobering influence of its former high dignity; for to serve his lordship had been something like gaining a royal warrant to an Oakfield tradesman, and John Flitch had never looked so high. Moreover, to the mind of John Flitch, Junior, so susceptible to feminine charm, the fair demesne where those delicate high-bred maidens walked or played in their wide but sheltered seclusion, was as a garden of enchantment, in which it behoved a male creature, admitted to it for certain specific services, to bear himself with the utmost caution and restraint, for fear of being banished forever from the hallowed precincts.

The young man, so bold with his eyes and so ready with his tongue in less awe-inspiring surroundings, would trot along the drive to Oakfield House without so much as a roving eye at the young nymphs who sometimes disported themselves within his enraptured sight, although he was intensely aware of them, and fed his soul with fluttering hopes that his gallant bearing might be the object of remark. It was for them he pomaded his locks and saw to the set of his blue coat, for them he cultivated that easy horsemanlike trot, so different from the scattering canter with which he struck admiration from the eyes of nursemaids outside this guarded garden of romance; it was with reference to them that his feeling for Mrs. Godbee was one of worshipful awe. He would have done anything to make a good impression on her; but the only occasion on which he was privileged to interview her, when she gave him a Christmas box with her own hand, he was so tongue-tied that he could hardly congratulate himself upon having made any impression at all, except, possibly, one of respectful idiocy.

NO doubt it was good for the soul of John Flitch, Junior, otherwise prone to bold adventure, to taste of this worshipful timidity before the delicate blossoms of girlhood that grew on a bush so far beyond his reach. Nothing came of it, except a fragrant memory. Within a year or two his father's business had so developed itself that he had to relinquish his morning rides and drives to others, and take up more responsible duties. Matrimony claimed him, and he made a good husband and father, though not without an appreciative eye to feminine charm outside his own home.

He had inherited his father's spirit of enterprise, and had more than his father's business capacity. Within a few years the firm of Flitch & Son had far outdistanced that of Barrow & Co. The growth of Oakfield brought ever-increasing custom, and by and by large profits. After his father's death, he embarked boldly upon the Higher Butchering, and as a meat salesman, joined the ranks of business men as distinguished from those of tradespeople.

At the time Miss Godbee was beginning to feel her burdens, John Flitch—Junior no longer—was living in a large house with a large garden on the outskirts of Oakfield, and going up to London to his business on most days of the week, like the great majority of his neighbors. At other times he was driving himself round to his various thriving retail establishments in a well-appointed phaeton, with a pair of good horses and a smart-looking groom behind. He was well turned out himself, his hair still sleek, though no longer black, his silk hat shining, a flower in the buttonhole of his fawn saucer-buttoned driving-coat. He was one of the most prosperous inhabitants of the now populous suburb, and his yearly income was generally supposed to run into five figures.

BY this time the character of Oakfield had completely changed. Its amenities had not yet entirely disappeared, but of the pleasant old-fashioned houses with the acres of gardens and paddocks surrounding them, there were few left, and still fewer that were not shorn of most of their land. Of the Best Families there was a surviving remnant here and there, but they hardly counted among the crowd of newcomers. Even the bigger houses that had been built in the early days of Oakfield's development were occupied by people of a lower social quality—jovial, well-living people, many of them, like John Flitch, with plenty of money to spend, and horses and billiard-rooms and cellars of wine to spend it on, who were quite satisfied with themselves and their suburb, within such convenient reach of London.

It was among this class that Miss Godbee, opening her exclusive portals at last to the influx of day-scholars, had to pick her difficult way. She still had the firm intention of keeping her school "select;" for among the crowd of nobodies who now made up most of the population of Oakfield, there was still a recognizable upper crust, though it was but a pale shadow of the aristocracy formerly inherent in the Best Families.

Mr. Flitch was one of the first to apply for admission for the two of his daughters who were still of school age. He was stirred by the announcement of Miss Godbee's concession, which meant a good deal more to him than to others of his neighbors who were in a position to take advantage of it.

A quivering golden aura of romance still hung about Oakfield House, shorn as it was. Other parents might welcome the opportunity of sending their girls to a high-class school within reach of their own doors, but he would be sending his, in imagination, to an enchanted palace, bright with the memories of his own vanished youth. He set out on foot to interview Miss Godbee, for it would have seemed like claiming some sort of equality to drive up to her door in his spanking equipage, and his soul was humble on this point, though in the ordinary way he liked to air his opulence.

There were no lodge gates to Oakfield House now; the old entrance to the park gave access to the public gardens. But there were some forty or fifty yards of the carriage-drive still remaining, and Mr. Flitch was affected by the memories brought to him

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When you should eat vegetable soup!

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Campbell's Vegetable Soup is real food, tempting to the appetite and rich with sustaining, healthful nourishment.

Fifteen fresh garden vegetables. Big barley grains. Alphabet macaroni. Broth of choice beef. Tasty herbs and seasoning. Thirty-two different ingredients combine to make Campbell's Vegetable as wholesome and satisfying a soup as you can place on your table.

21 kinds 12 cents a can

My game of golf is something classy
I wield a fearsome, wicked brassy
And when I've laid them all a stymie
Straight home to Campbell's Soup I hie me!

Campbell's Soups

LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL

as he trod the once familiar approach. Some years before, when the gardens were in course of making, he had stood where the new fence was going up, and gazed, under the same soft promptings of sentiment. Otherwise, he had not set eyes on Oakfield House for over thirty years.

THERE it was, just the same—the fine, solid stone mansion, with three long rows of windows, and enough left of its once spacious setting to preserve its ancient dignity, though modern brick and slate climbing the hill had hustled enviously around it. Really, thought the admiring Mr. Flitch, impressions of long ago reviving in him, it was still quite the nobleman's mansion, and a surprising place to come upon out of a street in urban Oakfield. Progress was all very well, but it would be a thousand pities if such a house as this were to be swept away, or even to lose any more of the ground that went with it, now of the highest building value. There was a slight air of decadence about it, which it had never had before, but probably a few hundred pounds spent on it would put that right again.

It must cost a lot of money to keep up such a house as that. Mr. Flitch had a dim recollection of having been asked recently by his Oakfield manager about Miss Godbee's account, and of telling him impatiently not to worry about it. Poor lady, if she had been a little pinched lately, it was to be hoped that this new move on her part would put her right again. Perhaps he might give her an encouraging word on the number of parents he himself could influence; and as for her account, he would look into that, but certainly not with the idea of pressing the best customer John Flitch & Son had ever had—one, indeed, upon whom his own handsome fortune might be said to have been founded, for he well remembered with what jubilation his father had taken one of his red-covered books and written, "*Mrs. Godbee, Oakfield House,*" upon its label.

HE was taken through the spacious hall, paved with black and white marble, and through a tall pedimented doorway, into Miss Godbee's morning-room, and waited there some little time for her. He had been in this room once before, when he had attended at Mrs. Godbee's request to receive his Christmas box. It had struck him then as a beautiful room for a lady to use, and struck him so now, although its quiet old-fashioned furnishing was less to his taste than the gilt and satin of the richer houses to which he had since grown accustomed. There was a large crayon portrait of Mrs. Godbee over the high mantelpiece—a speaking likeness of that commanding woman, which brought back to him a whiff of his youth. And hanging over a rosewood cabinet, there was a smaller tinted drawing of Miss Godbee, as a young, smiling girl, with the ringlets and sloping shoulders of the period.

He remembered her well now among the bevy,—one of the fairest of them,—though he had not, since he had known her by sight as the head of the school, recognized her as the girl of that drawing. He could feel himself squaring his shoulders as he trotted past a group of them sitting together under a tree on a hot summer morning with their needlework and their books. Ah, what a sweet place Oakfield had been in those days, all grass and trees and flowers and the song of birds, a fitting place for those ringleted Leghorn-hatted maidens to sun themselves in, so far removed from the noise and smoke of the town! It suited him very well as it was now, but he had been happier in his coat of butcher's blue, driving his cart between the blossoming hedgerows, than now, as he guided his handsome pair through the traffic of the streets. It would perhaps be an exaggeration to say that there was moisture in his eye as Miss Godbee came in and found him standing before her portrait; but if she had known how tender his heart was toward her, she might not have greeted him with that frigid bow and inquiring lift of the eyebrows.

MISS GODBEE no longer wore her hair in ringlets, and her shoulders, if still sloping, were disguised by the balloon sleeves of the period. But she was what was called in the parlance of the time an elegant woman, and Mr. Flitch felt no diminution of admiration for her as he turned from the youthful shadow to the middle-aged substance. He was a little shortsighted, and did not remark the chilliness of his reception, but opened out at once upon his business, with a good deal more suavity and address than he was accustomed to employ in opening up matters of business.

It had been a great pleasure to him to hear that the young ladies of the neighborhood were to have the advantages at Oakfield House that everybody thought so highly of. He had two girls of the age of fourteen and sixteen, now at boarding-school at St. Leonards-on-Sea. He proposed to take them away at the end of the current term—forfeiting fees in lieu of notice—and send them to Oakfield House as day-scholars, if Miss Godbee would be good enough to accept them as pupils.

Miss Godbee motioned him to a seat, and took one herself, looking at the card which she held in her hand. It was his business card, for he had no occasion to use any others. She hesitated a moment, and then said, in the well-bred but slightly clipped accents that spoke alike of her upbringing and her avocation: "It is true, Mr.—er—Flitch, that I have decided to take a few day-scholars; but—I hardly know how to explain myself without possibly offending you—I had not thought of opening my school exactly to—er—er— I have talked to the Vicar about it, and there are one or two children—of people I know—whom I am ready to take, and others that he—er—might possibly recommend. But—"

"Oh, I think the Vicar would give me a recommendation, ma'am," he said, still bathed in the roseate glow of his admiration for all that she represented, "if a recommendation is necessary. But I'm pretty well known in Oakfield, and—well, I think you know me pretty well by reputation yourself, and Mrs. Godbee before you. I saw the beginnings of this school, ma'am, which I suppose there aren't many folk left in Oakfield who can say."

She seemed to take hold of herself, sat more upright, and said in a slightly harder voice: "I haven't the pleasure of knowing Mrs. Flitch."

"Dead, ma'am, I'm sorry to say, or I shouldn't be coming up to see you like this by myself. Ye-es, I've been a widower for three years; but my eldest girl, she was old enough to look after things when her poor mother died. I've got four girls, ma'am—no boys. They've all been to school at Miss Marriott's at St. Leonards—a very high-class school, and ought to be, for the money they charge, though I don't grumble at that, for what I say is, in education as in everything else, never mind what you pay, as long as you get the best article. I don't know what Miss Marriott will say at my taking Winnie and Ethel away from her. She's told me that she looks upon them as among the brightest of her girls. Well, I wouldn't take them away to send them to any other school in England—or out of it, for that matter. But of course I shall be glad to have them at home, and I shall look upon it as an honor to have them finish their education here; and if I may say so, ma'am, they'll do you credit—in looks as well as in learning."

Miss Godbee, who had listened quietly, with her eyes upon him, and a look of distaste in them, said something rather ineffective about the pity of taking girls away from a good school, especially as they would not have a mother's care at home; but Mr. Flitch brushed this aside. "They'll be well looked after at home, ma'am," he said, "and I know they'll be well looked after here. I've admired and looked up to this school for over forty years, and I sha'n't admire or look up to it a whit the less when the distance is decreased."

MR. FLITCH seemed to think this rather neat, for he smiled as he said it. Miss Godbee did not return his smile. Her soul was sore within her. It had gone hard with her to see the girls who came to her school gradually declining from the status of those with whom she had played and been taught in her youth; and the change that she was about to make had been a bitter pill for her to swallow. She was not softened by Mr. Flitch's compliments. Of course, he had looked up to the school; he would have been lost to all sense of proportion if he hadn't. She only saw him now rushing in to claim privileges which in the old days would have been miles out of the reach of such as he. She remembered him quite well as a young man coming to the back door of the house with his meat-basket. She remembered particularly one hot Saturday morning when she and some other girls had been enjoying their weekly holiday sitting under a tree in the park, and they had laughed together at his self-conscious air as he had ridden past them on his way to the house. Alas, those happy summer days of girlhood, so free from care, were a long way off! But it would be a far blacker day for her than it actually was if she were forced to take in the daughters of her butcher, to fill the places of the sort of girls with whom she had been

How do you picture the woman you would like to be? Do you think of her as a happy wife—a happy mother?

The Woman You would Like to Be—

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Make up your mind, then, that you will have a beautiful skin; that you will not rest until you have made your skin absolutely clear, smooth, flawless.

For how can woman's face be lovely and attractive if her skin is disfigured by blackheads — by ugly little blemishes? if the pores are too large? if her nose is shiny with oil?

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If you are troubled with any of these faults — begin, now, to overcome them. You *can* make your skin what you will, for each day it is changing; old skin dies and new takes its place. Give the *new skin* the special treatment it should have, and see how smooth and lovely you can keep it—how quickly the defects in it will disappear.

You will find the right treatment for your special type of skin in the booklet of famous skin treatments that is wrapped around each cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap. Complete treatments for all the commoner skin troubles are given in this booklet. Two of these famous treatments are reproduced below.

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To reduce conspicuous nose pores, use this special treatment:

Wring a soft cloth from very hot water, lather it with Woodbury's Facial Soap, then hold it to your face. When the heat has expanded the pores, rub in *very gently* a fresh lather of Woodbury's. Repeat this hot water and lather application several times, *stopping at once* if your nose feels sensitive. Then finish by rubbing the nose for thirty seconds with a piece of ice.

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To keep your skin free from blackheads, use the following treatment:

Every night before retiring, apply hot cloths to your face until the skin is reddened. Then with a rough wash cloth work up a heavy lather of Woodbury's Facial Soap and rub it into the pores thoroughly, always with an upward and outward motion. Rinse with clear hot water, then with cold—the colder the better. If possible rub your face for thirty seconds with a piece of ice.

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brought up. Her soul revolted at the idea. It was an insult on the part of this bold-looking, ogling, common man to come and propose it to her. And he actually took it for granted that she had come down to such an extent that a refusal on her part was entirely out of the question!

She rose from her seat. "I am afraid I cannot take your daughters, Mr. Flitch," she said decisively. "I think you ought not to have asked me."

He was utterly surprised, and rose slowly from his seat, staring at her with open mouth. Her eyes were upon the card which she held in her hand, and enlightenment came to him in a flash.

He did not immediately take offense. In the old days, when he had been merely a retail butcher, though a very thriving one, he would not have expected his daughters to be taken in at a school like Miss Godbee's; nor would he have sent them now to a school which accepted the children of tradespeople. The line was clearly marked. And how should Miss Godbee know that he had raised himself so far above the rank of the shopkeepers of Oakfield?

"Ah, I see you're thinking of me just as Flitch, the butcher, ma'am," he said with an indulgent smile. "But that was some years ago. It's true that I run my retail shops still, here and there, but I'm in business in a pretty big way in the City of London, and I don't think there are many schools in England that would refuse my girls. Miss Marriott takes the highest class of young lady, and she made no difficulty about it."

Miss Godbee's hand was on the bell. "I think, then, you had better keep your girls where they are, Mr. Flitch," she said. "I am sorry that I cannot take them at Oakfield House."

A maid appeared at the door before Mr. Flitch had time to reply, ushering in a lady who had come to call. Miss Godbee greeted her almost with effusion, but turned to Mr. Flitch in the middle of her welcome, and said, "Good afternoon," with a bow of dismissal.

Mr. Flitch hesitated a moment, and then allowed himself to be shown out, his face suddenly dark and angry.

MISS GODBEE'S visitor was a Mrs. Maynard, who had once lived in Oakfield and now lived at Lancaster Gate. She brought with her an air of bustling self-satisfied fashion. Miss Godbee had borne herself a little stiffly toward her in the old days, for she had climbed into the best society in Oakfield with the same ruthless determination she had later used in climbing out of it. But there hardly existed a best society in Oakfield now, and Miss Godbee was so changed in spirit that she felt a genuine impulse of gratitude toward a woman who had taken the trouble to drive out from London to see her, even though previous experience made it seem probable that Mrs. Maynard had done so chiefly to exhibit her superiority.

But it was balm to the poor outraged lady to pour out her grievance to sympathetic ears. Mrs. Maynard was horrified at the presumption of Flitch, the butcher, and Miss Godbee was supported in her feeling of having done the right thing in rejecting his proposal. She wanted this support, for a cold uneasiness was already creeping over her at a memory that she did not impart to Mrs. Maynard.

Mrs. Godbee had paid her books weekly, with unfailing regularity; so had Miss Godbee until a few years before, when she had found it more convenient to let some of them run on until school fees came in in a lump. But lately even those had not sufficed to settle everything. For the first time for over forty years, money was owing to the tradespeople who supplied Oakfield House; and the largest sum outstanding was owing to John Flitch & Son, Family Butchers.

PRESENTLY Mrs. Maynard departed, and soon afterward, Mr. Horridge, the Vicar, called.

Mr. Horridge did not take the consoling view of her refusal that Mrs. Maynard had taken. Mrs. Maynard had said that if she once opened her doors to girls of that sort, it was good-by to everything. The Vicar seemed more inclined to think that it was good-by to everything if she closed them. "You couldn't take the ordinary shopkeepers' daughters," he said. "Nobody would expect you to; they wouldn't expect it themselves. But Flitch isn't one of them. He's no different, it seems to me, from Brinton."

"Oh, but the Brintons are quite different," she expostulated. "I know that Mr. Brinton gets his money from those big stores at Elmstead; but he lives here in quite a private way, just like anybody else. Both his sons were at Oxford, and his girls are clever, ladylike girls. I sha'n't mind having them at all."

"Flitch's girls are just as nice," said Mr. Horridge. "The stores at Elmstead sprang out of a grocer's shop, and Brinton's name was over the door when I first came here. Flitch has done much better for himself even than Brinton. Flitch is a rich man now. If he lived anywhere but at Oakfield, where he began, nobody would ever think of him as an ordinary butcher. I doubt if there's a school anywhere in the country that would refuse to take his daughters."

That was exactly what Mr. Flitch had said himself, and Miss Godbee's discomfort increased, especially when the Vicar went on to say: "You will have to take a large number of day-pupils if it's to be worth while taking any. Of course, there are some quite good people living in Oakfield still, professional men and so on—but the people who live in the biggest houses are just like Flitch. In fact, he's considered a sort of leader among them. They say he's worth ten thousand a year, and he spends his money freely. I should be afraid that if you have offended him, he might influence others—against you, I mean. He and Brinton are friends, I know. I've dined at his house with the Brintons."

All this made Miss Godbee very unhappy. She discounted the Vicar's pessimism as far as she was able. It had given her a shock to hear that he had dined at Mr. Flitch's house. But he had always had the reputation of being willing to dine with anybody who would give him a good dinner. People had joked together about that when he had first come to Oakfield twenty years before, succeeding old Mr. Brett, who had never dined out except with the cream of the Best Families.

Nevertheless, the people with whom Mr. Horridge had been criticized for consorting were very far above Flitch, the butcher, as Miss Godbee still saw him—as she had seen him, indeed, that very afternoon. Money could not gild him, but in the light of what the Vicar had said, she absolved him from presumption in expecting to send his girls to her. She hoped that her refusal had not been made in such a way as to offend him. There was even a slight aroma of the happy vanished years about Mr. Flitch. She remembered now that Sarah Gunning, whose father was a Master of Hounds, had said that he had a good seat on a horse, and somebody else had said once that if he hadn't ridden about in a blue linen coat with his head bare, it would have been possible to forget that he was a young butcher. That sort of man made his way in the world, and if he could never be a gentleman himself, he could give his children all the advantages that money could buy. No, there was nothing to complain of in Mr. Flitch's attitude toward life; but oh, what a comedown it was that she should be expected to consider and advance the ambitions of such as he!

THE poor lady sat at the open window of her bedroom on that summer night, turning sadly over in her mind the years that were past, and wondering what the years that were coming would bring to her.

The room in which she sat spoke eloquently of the large, secure outlook of her youth. It was the "best bedroom," sacred to the retirements of generations of its aristocratic owners. It had been her mother's room, and had seemed to fit her no less than it had fitted those who had used it before her. It reflected the dignity of the owner of such a house as this, and Miss Godbee had seemed to herself to be coming into her kingdom when she had taken to it after her mother's death. Now all its spacious dignity seemed hollow to her, for the foundations on which her life had rested were cracking and parting.

As she looked out upon the trees and the grass, dimly seen in the moonless summer night, she could imagine them stretching away, down the slope, to merge themselves in the fields and woods of her girlhood. It was impossible to forget the streets that now covered those fields, for they had crept so close that it was never quiet, as once it had been. But she could put herself in the mood of make-believe, and the tears came into her eyes as she imagined herself still under the protection of her mother, so strong and capable, and so loving to her only child, whose youth had been not less sheltered or cherished than that of the girls who had been her companions, nor less fortunate, living in this fine house, from which so many windows had opened upon vistas now closing. Oh, if only her mother had been alive, the trouble that she felt coming upon her would have been averted somehow! She was unequal to the burden, but she must

What ten million motor cars have taught women about their skin

The method they have learned to depend on

Two unbroken lines of cars wind along the popular motor roads. Everyone is motoring—week-ending at the beach, or the country club, or just driving for the pleasure of it. Fine dust settles in their skin and the wind brings a dry tightness.

Yet many women's complexions are younger and lovelier than ever before!

The severe exposure of motoring has taught them how important it is to find the right way to care for their skin, keep it beautiful and supple in spite of all exposure.

Today millions of women have found a method so wonderful in results that in all the world it is used more than any other—Pond's Two Creams. They leave your skin softer, more supple than you could have dreamed. They give just that finishing touch of loveliness you have always wanted.

A fine light cleansing that never leaves your face heavy with cream—gives the beautiful suppleness you want and then wipes entirely off! This is why millions of women prefer to cleanse with Pond's Cold Cream.

A marvelous freshening, an adding of youth—and unfailing protection. No wonder that the women of the United States alone use several millions of jars and tubes of Pond's Vanishing Cream every year!

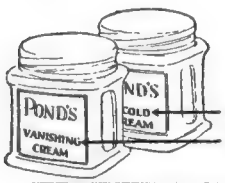
TRY THIS FAMOUS METHOD

See the wonderful improvement in your skin

Do this tonight. With the finger tips apply Pond's Cold Cream freely. The very fine oil in it is able to penetrate every pore of your skin. Let it stay a minute—now wipe it off with a soft cloth. The black on the cloth will show you how carefully this cream cleanses. Your skin looks fresh and is beautifully supple.

Then, in the morning, smooth on Pond's Vanishing Cream lightly over your whole face. If you wish, rouge—powder. How smooth and velvety your face feels! How new and charming the reflection in your mirror! The appearance of your skin for the whole day will prove to you how wonderful for your skin these two creams are.

Always after a motor or railroad trip, cleanse with Pond's Cold Cream and finish with the Vanishing Cream and powder. To see how these two creams will improve your skin use this method regularly. Begin now by buying both creams in jars or tubes in any drug or department store. The Pond's Extract Co.



removes coarsening dirt—restores suppleness
defies exposure—holds the powder

Photo by Victor Georg

Florence Nash says she likes Pond's Cold Cream because it leaves her face feeling so refreshed—not heavy and oily. And that Pond's Vanishing Cream really keeps her skin wonderfully smooth and fresh.

Exposure starts these troubles or makes them worse

Sunburn, Windburn, Chapping

The daily repetition of weather damage does more to age your skin than any other single factor. But the process is so gradual that except on specially severe occasions you do not notice it until your skin has definitely coarsened. Do not let this happen. For the insidious every-day exposure use the same method that saves your skin from the excessive damage of a long motor ride or a day on the beach. Keep your skin properly oiled by a nightly cleansing with Pond's Cold Cream. Then always in the morning, smooth on Pond's Vanishing Cream. It forms a delicate but sure protection. This method will keep your skin smooth and young years longer than would otherwise be possible.

Premature Wrinkles, Scaling, Peeling

These are especially the troubles of a dry skin. To avoid them you must protect yourself from all exposure and keep your skin soft day and night. Cleanse with plenty of Pond's Cold Cream nightly and leave some on over night. This will give your skin the oil it needs so badly and keep it from scaling and peeling. Then it will not develop little lines that grow into wrinkles.

But do not let the exposure of the day undo the results of this nightly oiling. Every morning smooth on Pond's Vanishing Cream liberally, prevent your skin from drying out again. Always carry a tube with you on motor trips to counteract their drying, ageing influence.

That Distressing Shine

Sometimes shine is due to a dry, tight skin, and motoring or even the slightest daily exposure aggravates the condition. You must apply an extra amount of Pond's Cold Cream at night after the cleansing and let it stay on. See how gladly your skin will absorb the fine light oil of this cream, how it will soften and relax and the shine disappear. Put on the Vanishing Cream in the morning to keep this suppleness through the day and be sure to carry it with you and use it frequently on any occasion of unusual exposure.

Accumulation of dirt and fat in the pores

Sometimes the oil in your skin accumulates in the glands and attracts dirt and bacteria—dust that blows into your face when motoring, or the daily soot of city streets. Your complexion is dulled, disfigured. You need specially careful cleansings. Pond's Cold Cream is so light it penetrates the glands and takes out excess oil and dirt together. Do this every night and always after any motor or railroad trip, and you will avoid a dull, muddy skin.

GENEROUS TUBES—
MAIL COUPON
WITH 10c TODAY

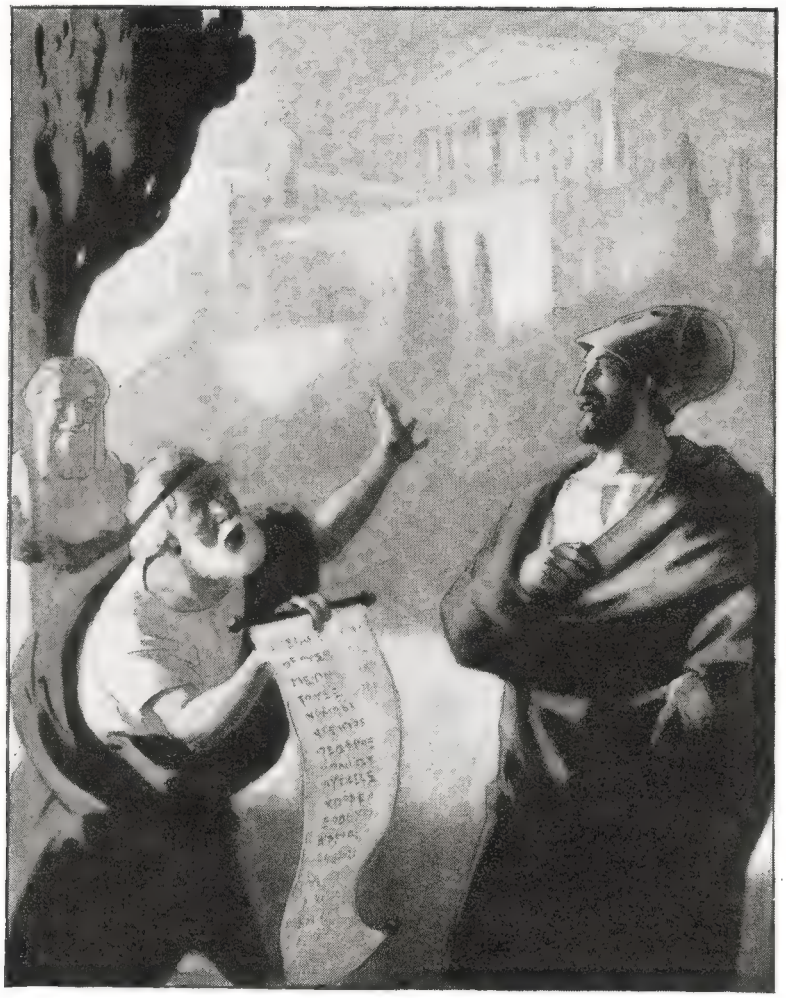
The Pond's Extract Co., 133P Hudson St., New York

Ten cents (10c) is enclosed for your special introductory tubes of the two creams every normal skin needs—enough of each cream for two weeks' ordinary toilet uses.

Name .....

Street .....

City ..... State .....



Even Pericles Had His Neighbors

IF there was one ancient Athenian who was in hot water all the time it was Pericles. His trouble seemed to be in living a thousand years before his day. And in a day when folks still believed in Olympian Gods, dragons, flying horses, this was *some* trouble!

Pericles was the first real man with a vision. He peered into the coming centuries; but he couldn't get his neighbors to peer with him. Every once in a while he would stop peering long enough to win a war or two and then he would ride on his countrymen's shoulders.

BUT the next day some rival would say Pericles had done wrong in fighting and down would bump the hero. Then a week or two afterwards he would be empowered to build a Parthenon or Acropolis, and when he would get about half way through another jealous adversary would kick about the cost.

"Pericles is wasting your money" would be the cry in the market place and a million or so Greeks would hasten to the door of Pericles' home and threaten him with tar and feathers.

"All right," he would reply to the onslaught, "let the cost go not to your account but to mine, and let the inscription on the Parthenon stand in my name as a living heritage to my wife and children." The glory of his great work always won out and he was allowed to leave to us another architectural miracle.

THE last years of his life were the hardest. He worked out a Family Budget, the first of history, perhaps, and again the men of Athens complained when he suggested they all try it.

"It is as it is," said Pericles, and added, "while I am here my family is safe; when I am gone they cannot live on my work alone."

Is there not a life insurance point to this? Is it sufficient for any man to leave only a reputation for greatness?

THE PRUDENTIAL INSURANCE COMPANY OF AMERICA

EDWARD D. DUFFIELD
President

HOME OFFICE: NEWARK
New Jersey

If Every Wife Knew What Every Widow Knows—Every Husband Would Be Insured

go on shouldering it. She had had high hopes of the new departure that she was about to make, but in this hour of weakness her hopes fell to zero. She had missed her way; no turning that she could take would lead her back to the untroubled sunlit paths of her girlhood.

But no one would have suspected her of such faintings of heart, as, erect and self-contained, she met her new pupils at the beginning of the term.

Their numbers had come up to her expectations, although the two daughters of Mr. Brinton, who had been promised her, were not among them. She knew very well why. If Mr. Flitch's girls were not good enough for her, Mr. Brinton's weren't. She could read that statement between the lines of the curt note in which Mr. Brinton informed her that he had changed his mind. She did not know whether other parents had been dissuaded from sending their daughters to her for the same reasons, though she had good reason to know that Mr. Flitch had taken the deepest offense at her refusal of his. No teaching, no credit. She had read *that* between the lines of the missive she had received from Messrs. Flitch & Son, inclosing her account, now much overdue, with a request for immediate payment in full.

The account was not very much overdue, and she settled it at once. But it did not do to think too much about how other outstanding bills were to be paid, and supplies obtained through the term that was coming.

IT was difficult to say whether that mistake of Miss Godbee's with Mr. Flitch was the ultimate cause of her downfall, which was not very long delayed. It was certainly a contributory cause, but there were others which perhaps she would never have surmounted.

She put up a good fight. If she had not inherited her mother's enthusiasm for education, she was experienced enough to find the right teachers to run her school in the right way. She taught very little herself, but made an admirable figurehead, and when the parents of Oakfield were admitted on public occasions to the fine house, and greeted by the fine lady at the head of it, they could hardly fail to congratulate themselves on getting good value for their money, though there were those here and there who grumbled at the fees, which were more than twice as high as those of the high school at Elmstead, two miles away. Still, Oakfield House under Miss Godbee gave a *cachet* which the high school could not. Its old aroma hung faintly about it, and illustrious names were still in evidence on the printed matter supplied when asked for. Girls were sent from Elmstead, in spite of the convenient high school, and Miss Godbee's pupils were remarked for their ladylike manners and appearance. Perhaps the tradition of "fashionableness," which Miss Godbee had grafted on to the old traditions of Oakfield House, helped her now, where before it had served to hinder her.

Mr. Flitch made a great deal of commotion at first about the slight put upon him, and then suddenly ceased to make a commotion. Influence was probably brought to bear upon him by his elder

The new use for Lux robs dishwashing of half its drudgery
54 dishwashings in a single package

And now—relief from that three-times-a-day-in-the-dishpan look

This new way to wash dishes is as easy on your hands as fine toilet soap

So natural—so obvious—you wonder it wasn't thought of before!

Lux for washing dishes. Of course it would bring relief from that three-times-a-day-in-the-dishpan look. Of course, too, it would be as gentle on your hands as on the dainty things you have always trusted to its pure suds.

Won't roughen hands

Every day your hands are in the dishpan for an hour and a half—sometimes even longer. How you dread this constant roughening of your hands! But dishwashing needn't make your skin rough and dry. It is the coarse soaps in your dishpan that play such havoc with your hands—robbing your skin of all its indispensable natural oils.

Nature provides the oils in abundance in millions of tiny sacs just beneath the surface of the skin. Their generous supply of healing, nourishing fluid is constantly refreshing the chiffon-thin outer layer of skin. That is why the normal skin is so pleasantly soft and supple.

But the supply is not plentiful enough to hold out when harsh, alkaline soaps are used for washing dishes. They are irritating to the skin; they drain all the oil sacs dry. Your hands become so coarse and scratchy that you can't even touch a piece of silk without roughing it up. With Lux in your dishpan you won't have any of these annoying after-effects. Lux won't dry the natural oils. It won't redden or roughen your hands. These delicate, tissue-thin flakes are as easy on the most sensitive hands as fine toilet soap.

Just one teaspoonful to a pan

That is all you need—just one teaspoonful in your dishpan. It sounds incredible—but try it.

A single package of Lux lasts for at least 54 dishwashings—all the dishes morning, noon and night, for almost three weeks. Not just the china for special occasions, but the regular, everyday dishes as well.

Spotless and shining in half the time

You will be delighted with your bright, sparkling dishes. Lux leaves them without a trace of film or murky cloudiness. Glasses, silverware and china — they're spotless and shining in half the time.

Just toss a teaspoonful of Lux in your dishpan. See how the delicate flakes dissolve the instant the hot water touches them. The Lux way is so much quicker and easier than waiting for bar soap to melt or stopping to beat up a lather with an awkward soapshaker.

Now just a swish of your dishmop and your pretty dishes are cleaner and more lustrous than ever before.

Keep a package of Lux handy on your kitchen shelf. Use it for the dishes always. Don't let that hour and a half in the dishpan every day be a hardship to your hands. Begin washing today's dishes with Lux. Lever Bros. Co., Cambridge, Mass.

daughters, who would not have wanted the slight emphasized; and Mr. Flitch may have thought that events were likely to justify his offense without influence of his brought to bear upon them. Besides, sympathy with him was not universal. There were some who said that Miss Godbee was quite right to keep her school select in that way, and she had a few pupils whom she would not have had otherwise.

But to balance this element of approval there were sneers at the airs she gave herself. Her rejection of Mr. Flitch's girls was brought up against her at the beginning of every term, when she accepted other girls who by no conceivable standard could be counted as their superiors. And the people who sent their girls to her were made to feel, here and there, that it was they who were giving themselves airs.

And there was the damning fact of tradesmen's bills irregularly paid. Try as she would, she could not keep the tide from rising, and the stigma of failure fastened itself upon her. She went very near to getting the numbers that would have made the new venture a success, but never quite attained to them, and there was no margin for fluctuations. On the first term in which new pupils failed to balance those who had left, the failure was known and exaggerated. After that she lost steadily, and the failure became real and apparent to everybody. But she kept her educational colors flying until the end, and no one had any cause of complaint against Miss Godbee on that score.

Finally another turn of the screw was given to her holding of Oakfield House. She had long ceased to understand how she stood with mortgages, rates, road-making and all the other charges that had increased beyond all bounds since her mother had left her her interest in the property. She had simply paid what had been demanded of her. And now, for some reason which her lawyers explained to her but she was incapable of following, she had to put down a large sum of money to continue her tenancy. Even to get quit of it, she would have to pay some hundreds of pounds. But get quit of it she must, for the other was out of the question. There was nothing for it but to sell all she possessed, and start the world again at the age of nearly sixty without a penny. Her ruin was complete.

OAKFIELD HOUSE was sold, and Mr. Flitch bought it. The idea of doing so came to him suddenly, and almost took his breath away by its large boldness. The house he had lived in since riches had come to him suited him in every way; he would certainly have no use for the thirty bedrooms of Oakfield House, and the handsome range of reception-rooms would answer no requirements that were likely to come into his life. No one, indeed, had supposed that the house would be bought for private occupation, for it was now quite unsuited to its surroundings. It might be put to some public use, or pulled down, and the land used for still more streets of little houses, which pay rather better than big ones.

But Mr. Flitch bought it to live in. Just that one house in all London, or in all England, would point for him his rise to fortune, and give it dignity. What would it matter that his friends and associates would laugh at him, and see nothing in his purchase of a house much too big for him but a desire to make a boastful splash with his money? He was without that desire, beyond the point where it showed itself in living well and driving good horses, for the ways of people much above the rank in life to which he had been brought up would be irksome to him. It was the hugging in secret the amazing vision of himself, John Flitch, living with his family in the house which in his youth had enshrined the lives of beings as much above him as the angels in heaven, that drove him to the purchase in a hot glow of desire. It was his one chance of romance in life, his youthful passions abated, and nothing before him but what he had enjoyed for years past, and enjoyed still, but not with the eager anticipations of youth to salt it. It would be something to end his days in Oakfield House, fallen though it was from its old estate. For him its ancient dignity still clung to it, and his youth would be renewed in imagination every day, when he could once call it his own.

ONE summer evening about a year after he had installed himself, Mr. Flitch was talking to Dudley Brinton, who was engaged to his eldest daughter.

Dudley Brinton was a fellow of his college—a scholarly, self-reliant young man, indistinguishable in appearance and manner from any other young Oxford don. Though he had raised himself in the social scale, he gave himself no airs of superiority over his father's old friend, and it was not necessary, before him, to assume an irksome gentility, as was sometimes expected of Mr. Flitch with other young people whom his daughters invited to the house.

They were sitting together after dinner in the great dining-room, with its pillared recess and its three long windows open to the warm gathering dusk. But for the occasional noise of the trams which climbed the rise past the gate, and the fainter sounds that came from the streets packed with houses lying all around them, it was not unlike the old days, when guests on such a night as this had said that it might be a hundred miles from London.

"The girls want me to dress for dinner every night," Mr. Flitch was saying. "Well, I'm not going to, Dudley; and I'm not going to ask my old friends to, either, when they come and dine with me. And I'm not going to have dinner later than seven o'clock. That's when I'm ready for it, and that's when I've been accustomed to have it, ever since I've had late dinner at all. I'm not going to change all my habits at my time of life, just because I've come to live in a big house."

"I don't see why you should," said the young man. "And I'm sure I don't know why anybody should object to dining at seven o'clock, if they get as good a dinner as you give them."

"Well, I hope they'll always get that, and a good glass of wine with it. I pride myself on that, and I've a right to. I don't believe there was ever better wine served at this table than's drunk at it now, even in the old days, though they may have been much higher people that drank it."

"I never heard that Miss Godbee was noted for the wine she gave her guests to drink."

"Oh, I wasn't thinking of Miss Godbee, or Mrs. Godbee, either, though she was a lady that might have lived in a house like this quite natural, even if she hadn't kept a school in it. You're not old enough to remember what Oakfield was like when Lord Tonbridge lived in this house. There are precious few people left in the place who do remember it. I should think most of the high nobility must have sat round this table—for I asked, when I bought it, and found it's the one that's always been here. I can't never get quite used to it, Dudley—me being at home here, instead of people like that. It's the same rooms I'm living in, and some of the same furniture I'm using. Still I don't want to ape their ways. It wasn't for that I bought Oakfield House, whatever people may say."

"I've told you, haven't I, that Robert Worsley, the son of the present Lord Tonbridge, was in my year at St. Michael's? He's a grandson of the one who sold this house. Once I asked him about it."

"That seems funny, that does—you being friends with him; and I suppose your grandfather would have come to the back door here, if he'd come to the house at all. It's where I used to come, and think myself lucky to have got the chance. I don't suppose there's many masters of houses like this know their back premises as well as I know mine. And here we are, drinking wine at Lord Tonbridge's table."

THE young man laughed. "I told Worsley how it stood," he said. "I shouldn't have felt comfortable with him if I hadn't."

"Well, that's what I like about you, Dudley. Fill your glass, my boy. I suppose you're as good as any of them at Oxford, but you're not ashamed of what you sprung from. No reason to be, either. I dare say if you went far enough back, you'd find that Lord Tonbridge himself didn't come from anything higher. Some goes up in the world, and some goes down, but you don't want no pretense about it. You'll go up, and my girls'll go up, and it'll be me and your father that have started you. Well, he's a man that had more education than I had to begin with, and perhaps he's a bit different; but I've got as high for myself as I want to, and I've no idea of putting myself in a place where I can be looked down on."

"I think you're quite right, Mr. Flitch. And as for rising in the world, it ought not to be wholly a question of money. It isn't, at Oxford, thank goodness! Everybody gets his chance there. Very different from this place, when it was a school! I never heard of anything like the snobbishness of Miss Godbee refusing to take the girls."

"Ah, Miss Godbee!" said Mr. Flitch reflectively. "Poor Miss Godbee!"

The young man seemed a little surprised at this relenting tone. "I believe

The secret *of* having beautiful hair

How to keep your hair soft and silky, full of life and lustre, bright and fresh-looking

NO one can be really attractive, without beautiful well kept hair.

Stop and think of all the good looking, attractive women you know. You will find their hair plays a mighty important part in their appearance.

Beautiful hair is not a matter of luck, it is simply a matter of care.

You, too, can have beautiful hair, if you care for it properly.

In caring for the hair, proper shampooing is the most important thing.

It is the shampooing which brings out all the real life and lustre, the natural wave and color, and makes your hair soft, fresh and luxuriant.

While your hair must have frequent and regular washing to keep it beautiful, it cannot stand the harsh effect of ordinary soaps. The free alkali in ordinary soaps soon dries the scalp, makes the hair brittle and ruins it.

That is why discriminating women, everywhere, now use Mulsified cocoanut oil shampoo. This clear, pure and entirely greaseless product cannot possibly injure, and it does not dry the scalp or make the hair brittle, no matter how often you use it.

When oily, dry or dull

If your hair is too oily, or too dry; if it is dull and heavy, lifeless, stiff and gummy; if the strands cling together, and it feels harsh and disagreeable to the touch; or if it is full of dandruff, it is all due to improper shampooing.

You will be delighted to see how easy it is to keep your hair looking beautiful, when you use Mulsified cocoanut oil shampoo.

The quick, easy way

Two or three teaspoonfuls of Mulsified in a cup or glass with a little warm water is sufficient to cleanse the hair and scalp thoroughly.

Simply pour the Mulsified evenly over the hair and rub it in. It makes an abundance of rich, creamy lather, which rinses out quickly and easily, removing every particle of dust, dirt, dandruff and excess oil—the chief causes of all hair troubles.

After a Mulsified shampoo you will find the hair will dry quickly and evenly and have the appearance of being much thicker and heavier than it really is.

It keeps the scalp soft and healthy, the hair fine and silky, bright, fresh-looking and fluffy, wavy and easy to manage.

You can get Mulsified at any drug store or toilet goods counter, anywhere in the world. A 4-ounce bottle should last for months.

Splendid for children —fine for men

Mulsified

REG. U.S. PAT. OFF

Cocoanut Oil Shampoo

Now that fresh fruits and vegetables are here you want a good vinegar—one that is more than "just sour". Heinz Vinegar brings out the hidden flavors of the foods and adds a rich mellowness of its own. There are four kinds:—Malt, Cider, or White to suit your purpose or your taste, and Tarragon for your special salads.

Heinz Vinegar mixed with Heinz Olive Oil assures the perfection of any salad combination.

HEINZ
PURE
Vinegars

if she hadn't refused to take your girls, and Father hadn't refused to send his because of it, she might have made a success of the old place after all," he remarked.

"I wonder if she would," said Mr. Flitch, in the same tone of leniency. "It's a queer thing to think of me living at Oakfield House, Dudley, and Miss Godbee in a couple of rooms in the Tonbridge almshouses. Who'd ever have thought in the old days that Miss Godbee would have come down as far as that?"

"I think she was lucky to get her nomination. Is it true that you worked it for her, Mr. Flitch?"

"Who told you that?" asked Mr. Flitch sharply. "It was after she got it that I was made a governor."

"Yes, I know; but—well, if you did help her, I think you showed a very forgiving spirit, after the way she'd treated you."

MR. FLITCH poured himself another glass of wine, and sipped it reflectively. "She'd always held herself high," he said, "and she'd a right to. If you'd known what she was like when she was a girl, younger than any of mine now! I remember her like that; and the other young ladies that came to school in this very house, a good half of them, I should say, belonging to the highest nobility—all happy and natural together, laughing and playing about the place, as I used to see them every day when I was young! I didn't like to think I'd helped to bring her down, Dudley. It was a shock to me when I heard that she'd leave Oakfield House without a penny to bless herself with. I didn't think no more of what had annoyed me with her when I heard that."

"Wasn't the high-nobility business always a little exaggerated? I know it was made the most of; but if her friends had been chiefly among highly placed people when she was young, wouldn't they have helped her when she came to grief?"

"Ah, that's where you don't do her justice, Dudley. She wouldn't take a penny from them; at least, she wouldn't ask them. Mr. Horridge wanted to do it for her. Mind, I'm telling you this in confidence, as you seem to have heard something; it's not to go any further. But she wouldn't let him—made him promise that he wouldn't. I wouldn't have given the promise myself, but he's weak—'Orridge. She'd take the nomination if he could get it for her. She'd lived and worked in Oakfield all her life, and thought she was entitled to apply for the benefits. That's how she put it. She's proud, and I respect her for it. Yes, I do. Oakfield was a very different place when she first came here to what it is now, but she was at the top of the tree even then. Now she's at the bottom. Most people would have asked for anything but that. But she's lived all her life here, and what she always was she is now, and knows it."

"Was it through Mr. Horridge that she got in?"

"Well, I suppose you know it wasn't. He wrote to Lord Tonbridge for one of his nominations, but they were both promised. Whatever I did in the way of talking to friends who had a pull—well, I asked that it shouldn't go no farther, and I don't want it said that I had anything to do with it. She wouldn't like it, of course."

"I don't know that it would do her any harm to know that you had heaped coals of fire on her head in that way. They say she holds her head as high as ever."

"High!" Mr. Flitch began to laugh, and when he had once begun, he went on, so that presently Dudley laughed too, and asked him what the joke was.

Mr. Flitch sobered himself a little, and wiped his eyes. "Well, if you'll never let out to a living soul!" he said. "It's too good to keep to myself, but it's not to go beyond you, Dudley. I was in the shop here the other day. I don't often bother myself about it; somehow, since I come to live at Oakfield House, I'm not so keen on the shop here. Getting a bit too big for my boots, I suppose. They were all kowtowing to me, as if I'd never cut up a sheep in my life, when in walks Miss Godbee.

"'Oh, Mr. Flitch,' she says, when she sees me there, as cool and superior as you please, but quite polite, 'I have been continually complaining of the quality of the meat sent to me since I went to live in the almshouses. I pay the same price as before, and ought to have the same attention. Yesterday I ordered a cutlet and was sent nothing but a piece of scrag. I shall be obliged if you will look into it.'"

HERE Mr. Flitch interrupted his narrative to laugh again.

"She walks out with her head in the air," he continued, "not as if she'd scored off me particularly, you understand, but just in her ordinary way—a lady who's had a complaint to make to one of her tradesmen, and when she's made it, she's finished with him. Oh, it was rich! There stood I with my hat in my hand—it had come off my head somehow—and just for all the world as if the old lady—her mother—had come into the shop thirty or forty years ago, and we trembling in our shoes for fear of losing her custom. That's blood, Dudley. Blood! She's got it, and I haven't, though I'm the master of Oakfield House and she's come down to an almshouse!"

"Well, perhaps it is," said the young man, "though some people might call it something else. Was there anything in her complaint?"

"Ah! I looked into that. I turned round and found 'em sniggering. That made me furious, somehow. I didn't speak to *them* with my hat in my hand. 'If ever I hear of you serving that lady with anything but the best,' I said, 'out you go—the whole pack of you.' Oh, I gave it 'em straight. They weren't sniggering when I done with them, I can tell you that."

Mr. Flitch rose from his seat.

"Well, we'd better go into the other room," he said. "Jessie wont thank me for keeping you here talking. Miss Godbee! I wonder how many times she's gone through this door laughing and happy. Just switch off the light, my boy."

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THE SHOT IN THE NIGHT

(Continued from page 49)

best when he'd got me most wretched. And he didn't get tired of it. Oh, I can't tell you."

"Go on."

"Well, it was last night—tonight, I mean, just before I went to bed. My husband told me he'd been the owner of Dick's ship for some months. Dick is first mate now. So—you can't believe a man would be so vile—my husband bribed the captain to dismiss Dick with a bad character." She almost choked: "To dismiss him for being drunk on duty! He's ruined—done for." Her voice rose. "And when I thought of my boy Dick, as I lay there in bed, ruined, done for—something seemed to go in my head. My husband had a revolver for burglars. I knew where it was. . . . . I don't know how I did it. . . . . I just ran in, right up to his desk, and fired at him. And I don't know, I don't know—and here I am, and here I am— Oh, my God!"

My hand went out to find hers, to hold it in a reassuring grip. I did not trust myself to speak, for the horror and the repulsion had gone; in my heart was only pity.

For a few moments my mind worked in the midst of confusion. Save her, somehow, I must, but—how? It was no use to tell her to run away. She would be caught. The solution did not come to me until the woman, with a profound sigh, let herself sink back, while from her weak hand the revolver fell upon the floor. I pulled her to her feet.

"Look here," I said. "I don't know you. I didn't know him. I don't care whether you killed him or not, but I'll help you."

"Yes," she said, looking up at me. In the beautiful eyes lay childish trust and complete weariness.

I picked up the revolver: "There's only one way. We must make it look as if he committed suicide."

"Yes," she said listlessly.

"Will you wait here for a moment while I—arrange things?"

She nodded, but just as I reached the desk and its ghastly occupant I heard her footsteps behind me. She dared not remain alone. I caught a glimpse of her now and then, as I fitted the fingers about the weapon. I managed to curl the little finger to make firm the grip of the nerveless hand. Yes, it was complete. Then I was surprised to hear behind me a hysterical little laugh, and the woman's voice, saying: "He was left-handed." I could not help smiling through my horror, at this revival of the spirit of self-preservation, and shifted the revolver to the left hand.

"Now," I said, turning to her, "it's quite simple. Where does your doctor live?"

"Oh, not him, please. . . . . Anyhow, he lives quite some way off."

"So much the better. Better not have your doctor if we can help it. Isn't there one in this road?"

"Yes. Dr. Felstead—nearly opposite."

"All right. You know the story to tell? You went to bed at—better tell the truth—at what time?"

"Eleven o'clock."

"And your husband stayed in the study, working; he said he had something urgent to prepare. Round about half-past four a shot woke you up. You jumped out of bed, ran in here, and found him. You understand? Really, pull yourself together. Repeat what I have told you."

Staring at me, in a hypnotized voice, she said: "At half-past four a shot woke me up; I jumped out of bed, ran in and found him, and then—and then—"

"Then you lost your head, and you telephoned for me, Mr. Brown."

"Mr. Brown."

"Yes. I'm an old friend of the family. I arrived, and you asked me to go for the doctor. I'll go now."

The small hand clutched my arm. "No, ring up, please. Don't leave me."

"All right. But when the doctor comes, it's you who must open the door."

IT seemed a long time before Doctor Felstead came. I had had trouble with him over the telephone, for he did not seem to understand how a person who was not a patient should want him so early in the morning. At last I made him realize that there was a casualty; he arrived at twenty minutes to seven. All that time I had been pacing about the tragic room, watching my ghastly companion, and tremulously feeling that he was obstinately staring at me through those half-closed eyes. I kept a watch, too, upon the woman in the other room, who had thrown herself into the armchair. From time to time I went to her, forcing her to sit up and to repeat her story. She terrified me, for the words came as from a phonograph. Also, at the last moment, when she heard the front door bell, she gave a scream of terror and clutched me round the neck in a maniacal grip. I had to use violence at last to tear her hands apart, to shake her to her feet and to drive her, whimpering and crying, to the door.

I heard the door open, the doctor's voice, his steps in the hall. Just as I was moving toward the door, a sound caused me to turn, a loud sound which had come from the corpse. Shaking with terror, I gazed at the motionless thing. It was only as the doctor entered that I realized that the revolver had fallen from the hand. I don't know why, but this made me feel sick with fear; it seemed to me that our scheme was set at naught by this trifling accident. I don't know why, but I formed the idea that if the pistol were not grasped in the dead hand, we should be exposed. I rushed toward the body. The doctor was coming in. In a sudden fit of madness, I picked up the pistol and thrust it into my pocket.

The doctor gave me a curt nod, went up to the body, felt the pulse. The woman in the doorway was watching me, her eyes blinking with hysteria. While the doctor was sounding the heart, I could hear her voice mechanically reciting: "—to bed at eleven o'clock. . . . . I was asleep, and at half-past four. . . ."

She was tying the rope round her neck, now that the pistol no longer lay on the floor, for I had had no chance yet to put it back. If I could only get behind the doctor! I went up to the woman, and seized her arm in a grip so savage that she winced with pain. "Hold your tongue!" I whispered hoarsely. She stopped suddenly, as if paralyzed. I rejoined the doctor. If only I could get on the other side!

The doctor was strange. He would not know that this man was left-handed. Then he turned to me and said: "Heart failure!"

"What? How?" I asked.

"Oh, it's quite clear." I was too stunned to speak. I let the doctor raise up the body, drag it to a sofa, open the shirt and vest, murmuring meanwhile: "He's dead; I'm sorry to say that's quite certain, but perhaps it will be some satisfaction to you if I make still more sure." The doctor's fingers were nimble; after a moment the man's chest lay exposed, while the doctor applied his stethoscope. There was no wound.

I felt dizzy. Here was something that I couldn't understand. A man struck as if by lightning, and behind me the woman, the murderess, whom I'd found with the weapon in her hand!

THE doctor had finished: "I'm sorry to say, Mrs.—I haven't the pleasure of your name—that I'm afraid there's no hope. Let me advise you to go to your room." She did not reply, and so the doctor turned to me: "Perhaps you will look after this lady. I suppose the servants will be coming down soon?"

Some instinct was speaking to me now, for I said in an even tone: "Of course, I'll look after her. It's a great shock to her to come in here and find her husband like this. How long do you think he's been dead?"

"Well," said the doctor, opening and closing the fingers with complete casualness, "it's difficult to say. There's no real rigor mortis yet, but there's just a little. I should say that he must have died where he sat, not earlier than midnight, and not later than two o'clock in the morning. Still, that's of no interest to you. I'm afraid you'll have to come to the inquest. I think, if you'll excuse me, I'll go now. I can't do anything more for you."

"Thank you, Doctor," I said, seeing him out.

When I came back, the woman had not moved.

"So," I whispered, "you didn't kill him."

"I shot him," she murmured.

"No, no," I said consolingly, in the tone one uses to a child. "Don't you understand? It was a dead man you fired at. He had been dead over two hours when you fired at him." Then my eyes caught sight of a chiffonier between the two tall windows. "Look," I said, pointing to a shattered Lowestoft bowl, "that's where your bullet struck."

"A Legatee's Shoes," another of these dramatic "After Midnight" stories by W. L. George, will appear in the forthcoming July issue.

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THE FROG

(*Continued from page 70*)

understand. Froggie's face was sheet-white, his body curved like a bow, his arms reacting like steel brakes against the pull of Alan-a-Dale. . . . . Fifteen yards. Rootin' John's voice rose above the clamor:

"Let 'em go! Don't stop 'em, Marse Kennedy! Let 'em go!"

Ten yards, and the line still held. If a single horse plunged or balked, or varied that steady walk, the whole line would crumble, and the usual twisting and maneuvering would begin. Marse Kennedy's voice sounded from the starter's platform. He didn't intend to let any jockey outguess him.

"No, no, no! I'm not going to let you go. Might just as well pull 'em in. Quiet those horses down, quiet 'em down, I tell you!"

But the jockeys knew Marse Kennedy. Five yards more, and no starter in the world could resist an approach like that, especially right in front of the grandstand, and with a holiday crowd looking on, spellbound. Every boy crouched in his saddle, eyes on the barrier trigger in Marse Kennedy's right hand. The wall of horseflesh tiptoed onward toward the ribbon that barred the path. Again the voice of the starter:

"The first boy who sticks his head under that tape gets thirty days in the kitchen. Quiet 'em down. It's not going up! It's not—"

"Whang!" went the barrier, and Marse Kennedy's voice rose to a shriek:

"You're off! Get away! Get away! Get away!"

THE crowd roared its applause, for every boy, anticipating the command, had plunged at the same instant. Froggie Monteith took his horse off the place immediately, and rated him far back and on the outside. Star Haven, Captain Adams and Parnassus took the lead, with Kenwood in fourth place and on the rail. Three horses led the second division; two more were being choked back on a line with Alan-a-Dale.

It was on the first turn, when he was smothered with dust and almost blinded, that Froggie experienced his first premonition of evil. Even then he had no fear, just an odd feeling for which he could not account. He knew what was happening in the race just as plainly as though the Information Kid had not warned him ahead of time. Star Haven and Captain Adams and Parnassus were being deliberately killed off—hustled out so fast that they would have nothing left when Kenwood challenged them in the stretch. The second division held no real contenders, but they formed a barrier between Alan-a-Dale and the leaders. The two boys who were trailing the field were there to pocket him if he took the rail. All this Froggie had foreseen and discounted. Luck had favored him. He had the outside position, and there had been no delay at the post. Alan-a-Dale's sire was one of the greatest stretch runners in America. Froggie reasoned that he could hold off until the last moment and then come up on the outside. There would be no rough work in plain view of the judges and the grandstand. Danger lay on the backstretch and the far turn, and at these points Froggie intended to keep well away from the rail and back of the field.

Perhaps it was something going on in the mind of the white-faced girl in the grandstand that communicated itself telepathically to the boy on the heavy-running chestnut. He only knew that his heart was thumping violently, the cold sweat beading his forehead. It seemed that the whole world was trying to keep him from Miss Dolly.

"A queen, and a sport and a lady!" he muttered, and at the three-quarters pole made his first move. The leaders were weakening, and the second division spreading out. He swung still farther to the outside and gave Alan-a-Dale his head. But the big horse had been choked back against his will, and now he was inclined to sulk. The little hunchback crouched low, riding now as a frog swims. His arms and legs moved in perfect rhythm with the swing of the brute beneath him; his voice came sharp and clear as the call of a coxswain to his crew. It hammered its message into the equine brain, inflamed the sulky equine spirit—coördinated the equine muscles.

"Hi! . . . . Hi! . . . . Hi! . . . . Hi!" The sullen brute succumbed hypnotically to the call of the Frog, and his stride lengthened. Alan-a-Dale swung into the stretch on the extreme right of the second division, and even then he was bumped by St. Andrew, who was taken clear across the track only to get the worst of the argument. The lost ground was made up in another fifty yards, and the chestnut straightened out in fifth place. At the head of the stretch, Kenwood was given the rail. Captain Adams, Parnassus and Star Haven were still in the lead, but tiring. The little hunchback realized his mistake only when he saw Kenwood go into the lead with a sudden rush. That burst of speed, hidden all season, was something Froggie had not reckoned on. Instantly a green and gold cap went down on the neck of Alan-a-Dale, and Jamie Monteith began the supreme effort of his life.

ROOTIN' JOHN was earning his money; make no mistake about that! From the moment the barrier went up, the king of the Come-on Clan was out to break all records. Back and forth he raced on the broad steps of the grandstand, curved fingers clutching at the skies, the veins showing purple on his throat, and his voice tuned to the pitch of Gabriel's trumpet!

"Allan-a-Dale! Come on, you Alan-a-Dale! Ride him, you Frog! Bring him up, Froggie! Into the stretch you go! Now you come on! Alan-a-Dale! Show 'em up, Froggie! Get up with him, Kid! *Froggie! Froggie! Froggie! Wa-hoo!"*

Two hundred yards from the wire, and not a man in the grandstand thought the boy had a chance. One hundred yards, and the crowd began to murmur. Fifty yards, and the multitude went crazy. A powerful chestnut, in blinkers and bandages, had come from the skies to lap the flying leader, and with every jump the margin between them grew less.

Rootin' John foamed at the mouth, body swaying, arms tugging at an imaginary rope.

"Alan-a-Dale! *Alan-a-Dale!* ALAN-A DALE!"

"Froggie!" screamed the Dough Girl. *"Froggie dear!"*

A flash of green and gold, a blur of flying horses, three judges squinting along a wire—and it was Alan-a-Dale that got it by an inch on the post! Up shot the white numbers to confirm the miracle. The crowd roared its tribute, and then stampeded back to the betting-ring and the pay-off windows.

MISS DOLLY stood there a moment, swaying unsteadily on her feet. Then she smiled faintly, crumpled up her program, and walked toward the nearest exit. She did not even wait to see Froggie come back to the winner's circle. The race was over, and he was safe; that was sufficient. It was now Miss Dolly's turn to consider her own plans for "going to the post." She boarded a race-track train, handed the conductor a commuter's coupon, hesitated, and then tossed the book out of the open window. Penniless and with no mark upon her person to identify her, she alighted at San Diego, and walked along through the streets, waiting until dusk should descend upon the Square of the Pigeons at Balboa Park.

The racing extras came out, a little earlier than usual, and a newsboy shrilled at her a headline:

"Star Jockey Dying! All about the injury to Jockey Monteith. Here y'are, lady!"

Some shocks are so severe that the stunned mind cannot at once send up its protests but continues to function mechanically.

The Dough Girl's fingers tore away an enameled brooch at her throat.

"Here!" she told the boy. "Take this and give me a paper."

The youngster pocketed the trinket with a grin, and hurried on. Miss Dolly's trembling hands clawed at the paper. The words leaped up to meet her:

"Jockey Monteith was probably fatally injured after the third race this afternoon, when Alan-a-Dale, the winner, ran away with him. Weak from his exertions, the boy couldn't check his mount, and when he tried to jump clear, his foot caught in the stirrup and he was dragged. He was unconscious when taken to the San Diego Hospital, and physicians fear his skull is fractured. Monteith's finish on Alan-a-Dale, when he came from nowhere to nip Kenwood in the last jump, was the greatest effort the track has ever seen."

What would you do in his place?

The steeplejack lights his pipe and goes on painting

Imagine, if you can, a steeplejack 487 feet above the street level. Hanging on by his teeth he is applying a more or less rough-and-ready coat of paint to a flagpole.

Right in the midst of a busy morning's painting an adventurous bee buzzes into the picture. In fact, there are two bees, both buzzing viciously.

What should the steeplejack do?

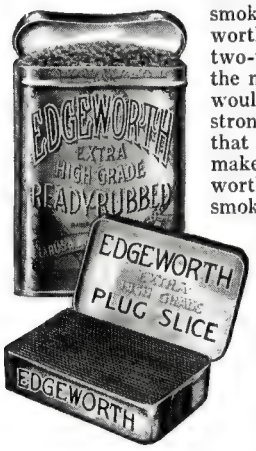
There being in the profession no local rules for buzzing bees, your average steeplejack probably would get the all-clear signal from below and slide promptly down to safety.

But not Our Hero. He takes out his pipe, lights it, and goes on painting.

"It soothes the nerves," he says frankly about pipe smoking.

We have no way of knowing what kind of tobacco the steeplejack pours into his pipe on these bee-buzzing occasions, but we have a feeling that it is Edgeworth.

For Edgeworth does much to give the smoker a sense of calm, peaceful security.



Of course we wouldn't care to go on record as claiming that smoking a can of Edgeworth is as good as a two-weeks rest cure in the mountains; but we would like to register strongly the opinion that smoking any pipe makes life seem more worth living and that smoking a pipe filled with Edgeworth helps a lot.

If you are interested in finding out more about Edgeworth, the most sensible plan is for you to let Larus & Brother Company send you some free samples so that you can try the tobacco for yourself.

Just write your name and address down on a postcard and you will receive immediately generous helpings both of Edgeworth Plug Slice and Ready-Rubbed. If you will also include the name and address of your tobacco dealer, we will make it easier for you to get Edgeworth regularly.

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The paper fell from the hands of Miss Dolly. She did not faint; neither did she scream. She experienced a sort of mental electrocution. A clean white flame tapped the innermost recesses of her soul, burning away the fleshly dross, and leaving nothing but the divine. How she got to the hospital she never knew. Of what befell thereafter she was not conscious. Dry-eyed and calm, she was ushered to the bedside of Froggie Monteith, whose hands were still moving convulsively.

"I'll make it, Miss Dolly! . . . . I'll get up there in the last jump! . . . . *Hi! Hi! Hi!*"

Then torpor, followed by another moan:

"Can't hold him, Miss Dolly — too weak."

The Dough Girl's fingers closed quietly over the waving hands. He seemed to recognize her touch.

"You've won, honey," she whispered. "It's all over, sweetheart! You've been just a little hurt—just a little; but the doctors are going to fix you up. I'll take care of you, honey. I'm right here."

"Miss Dolly, is—this—Mexican—Sunday?"

"Yes, dear. You don't have to do a thing: just hold Dolly's hand. Sister loves you. There now—*quiet*—"

A GAME little fighter was Froggie Monteith! Death couldn't pry him from the saddle, not while a "queen and a sport and a lady" was there to help him. In a week the crisis was met and conquered. Where the girl ate or slept or how she kept body and soul together no one ever knew, not even Miss Dolly herself. But youth and love are twin keys to the world of magic.

The bang-tails moved on to other tracks, and the weeks unfolded. Old man Hagen remained in San Diego, and on the first day that Froggie was wheeled into the sunshine, the veteran owner handed the boy an envelope.

"Son," he said gruffly, "you'll be riding again in six months, and for the best stables in the world. Your contract's worth more to me now than ever—twenty thousand, I figure. I'm surrendering it to you—for nothing. It's there in this envelope, along with a check for ten thousand. Some day I'll go clear to England to see you ride in the King's colors. So long, kid, and good luck!"

That night Jamie, pale and frightened, asked Miss Dolly. She listened in a dazed silence until he began to dwell upon the subject of his own unworthiness. Then she went all to pieces, her taut nerves snapping as guitar-strings part under a knife-blade.

Hysterical cries brought a nurse hurrying into the room.

"I want to die!" wailed Miss Dolly. "I want to die! Let me go back to hell! It aint true! I aint a queen and a sport and a lady! And oh, my God, how it *hurts!*"

But if pure happiness sometimes pains, it is not for long. There was really nothing much to do except leave the pair alone. Nurses are an intelligent lot. When one of them looked in a little later she saw the Dough Girl kneeling by the bedside of the Frog as at a shrine, and—

"Miss Dolly," she heard him say, "can I—can I have—another kiss—*now?*"

Very softly the nurse closed the door.

CONQUEST

(Continued from page 89)

it could not be an hour since the people had gone.

His foot encountered something round, horridly soft; shivering in disgust, he recklessly struck a match. A body! And near by were others, men and women both, and protruding from each was a tiny feathered stick.

Poison arrows!

So that was the cause of the terror which he could feel still hanging in psychic waves in the darkness. Panic—he caught something of that scene: a rush of black bodies thronging for the boats, eyes glaring from faces suddenly become masks of fear. An inarticulate murmur of desolation, with here and there a shriek, as one or another was bitten by that almost invisible death—a last surge, as of vermin fleeing a fire.

Those tiny arrows spoke of something outside there—small, soft somethings, individually harmless, but in mass as deadly as the mosquito-cloud winging up from the marsh.

The Südd had struck; Mela Lot had fled—and Mela Lot knew.

Owens became aware that he was coldly, deadly afraid. A mist had risen on the swamp; up there on the bank he was above it, but in the canoe he would have to grope amidst its thick opalescence. A rush of anger came up in him. Damn Lampert! What did the fellow want to get lost for? He had gone to "pick up a brace of doves for Marquand's dinner" —when it was doubtful if Marquand would ever eat again! But warnings slid like water from Lampert's cool insistence on his own way. And now some one must go out after him, risking his life to save Lampert's precious skin.

There came to Owens an ignoble thought that perhaps, by swiftness and silence, he might win his way back to the station unseen by whatever might be hidden under that fog-veil. He would have been to Mela Lot's; he would have done his best. It was ridiculous, hunting anyone out in that doubled mystery of night and fog. Besides, Marquand and Hayford deserved some consideration; if anything happened to himself, they would be left alone with that gang of unreliable niggers.

He could almost see that thought leering over his shoulder like some vagrant of his mind. It seemed to come shambling up, as on nights of stress strange creatures, rarely seen before, come sneaking out from the hidden places of cities —ratlike creatures, whispering insidiously, ready to rifle or to run.

One suspects so little of what may lurk within one until circumstance stirs the depths. And this thing must have been there long, for it came with such a sickening assumption of familiarity. Spitting

PERMANENT ENAMEL BAKED ON STEEL

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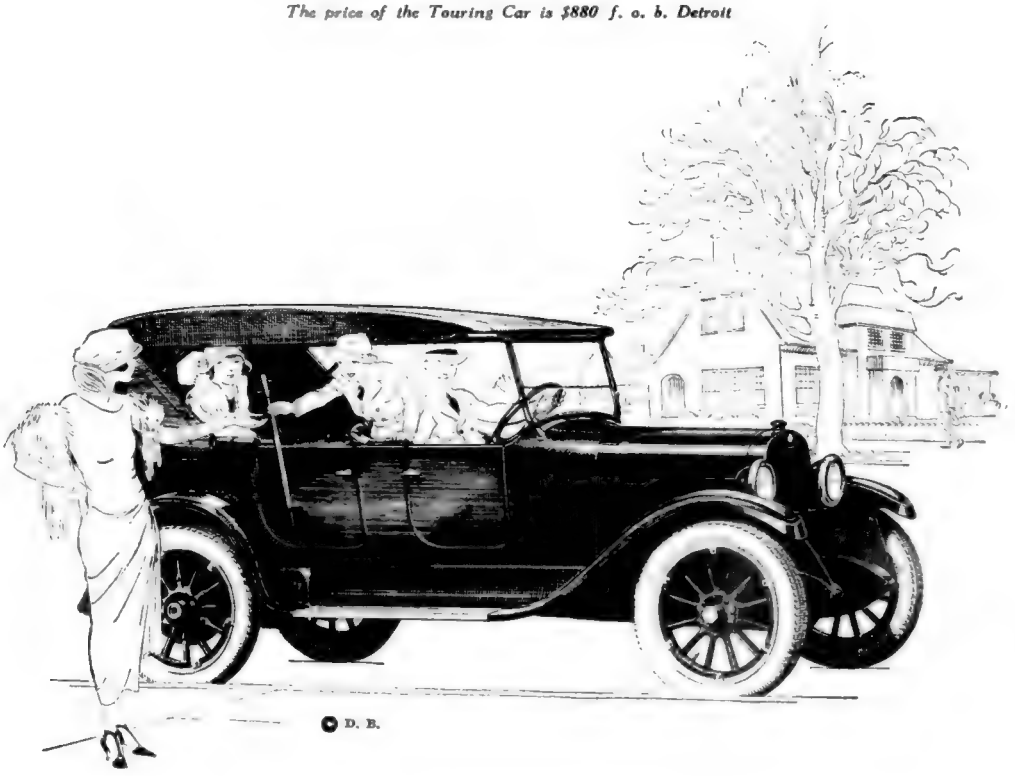

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in self-contempt, Owens started down the bank, down into the mist which rose above his head as he bent to shove the canoe afloat again.

If only for his own sake in the years to come, Lampert must be found.

BY paddling standing up, Owens could keep his eyes above the fog-wreaths. With his body hidden from the shoulders down, he moved like some mysteriously veiled bust gliding on the surface of a second sea, picking his way along the water channels outlined by the papyrus tops overhead.

Papyrus!

All his life seemed to have been spent under the shadow of these damned reeds. For years they had hung their tassels as rags of derision, then suddenly as banners of hope, while now— He saw them again, as they grew in the wet muck where the ranch sloped to the bottom lands of the Rio Hondo in far-off California. His father, long, bony, ineffectual, with the inturned gaze of the born dreamer, perpetually puttering in an outhouse to find some way of turning those stalks into print paper! He took it seriously, as an inventor must, foreseeing the day when the wood-pulp forests would be gone and the great American public would gasp in vain for its daily dope of the press.

A board-and-batten California house, bursting with children. A second family, those; Owens himself was the son of his father's youth and a first wife. Bermuda grass in the alfalfa fields, wild celery among the corn, bills at the grocery, and the elder Owens immersed in his "process." On all the place that papyrus patch alone showed care. Owens remembered the bitter satisfaction he had felt when an occasional frost cut the tropical reeds down to the ground.

He had made his way through high school; he could have worked through college too, but the dismay in the eyes of his stepmother had stopped him. Poor Mrs. Owens—"you," as he always called her, finding it impossible to address her by any more intimate name—warped and worn by too much childbearing, yet with attempts, half funny, half pathetic, to realize that apotheosis of "niceness" inculcated by the women's magazines! No wonder she looked aghast at any hint of her stepson's leaving. All those mouths to feed, and the father's eyes and ears stopped by dreams. Owens took a job, instead, in an El Monte garage, and put in his spare time on those lean acres.

Then had come the war and the draft, and without even consulting him, the local exemption-board had placed him on the deferred list. The war must be won, of course, but meanwhile the Owens tribe must eat. . . . .

But how could one make Lampert, reared under the nurturing shadow of his father's fortune, understand *that?* One couldn't, and that realization had been bitter to Owens, for he had been ready for hero-worship, Lampert having made something of a name for himself in the flying force. He looked it too, which helped much; not all heroes can take that hurdle. Then again, as the son of the financial backer of the suddenly successful "process," he was important. In fact, it was more as an outlet for his jaded, nervous restlessness after the stress of war, that the Lampert interests had taken up with this African papyrus scheme at all.

Lampert! As Owens paddled, he went over again their first meeting down in Loanda Pequeña, his mind revolving again about those moments when their mutual dislike had first started. A low sky which seemed to sit right on top of the cliff-like Portuguese houses; the streets, all mud and carrion-crow; the courtyard with its smells, sprouting bananas and lolling niggers. And against it Lampert, immaculate, poised, rather unreachable. Within five minutes had come the question which Owens had foreseen and dreaded.

"Did you get across? What regiment were you with?"

He could hear again his own answer, ungracious with concealed embarrassment: "They exempted me."

Hang the fellow, he need not have taken it like that. He might have given a chance to explain, instead of instantly changing the subject in that beastly courtesy which was like a wall between them. It was useless saying that one didn't care. The secret rankle of it all was that one did. And ever since, in the weeks of coming upriver, in the time since then in the Südd, there had been the constant pinpricks of Lampert's manner.

Was there the slightest risk to be taken, it was Lampert who took it. Not swaggeringly, of course; it was all done with that courtesy which is perhaps the sharpest weapon that young men have for each other. Just a cool, "I'll go; it would be better for Owens to stay and look after things here." It had come to be a settled thing that Owens always "stayed here," wherever "here" happened to be.

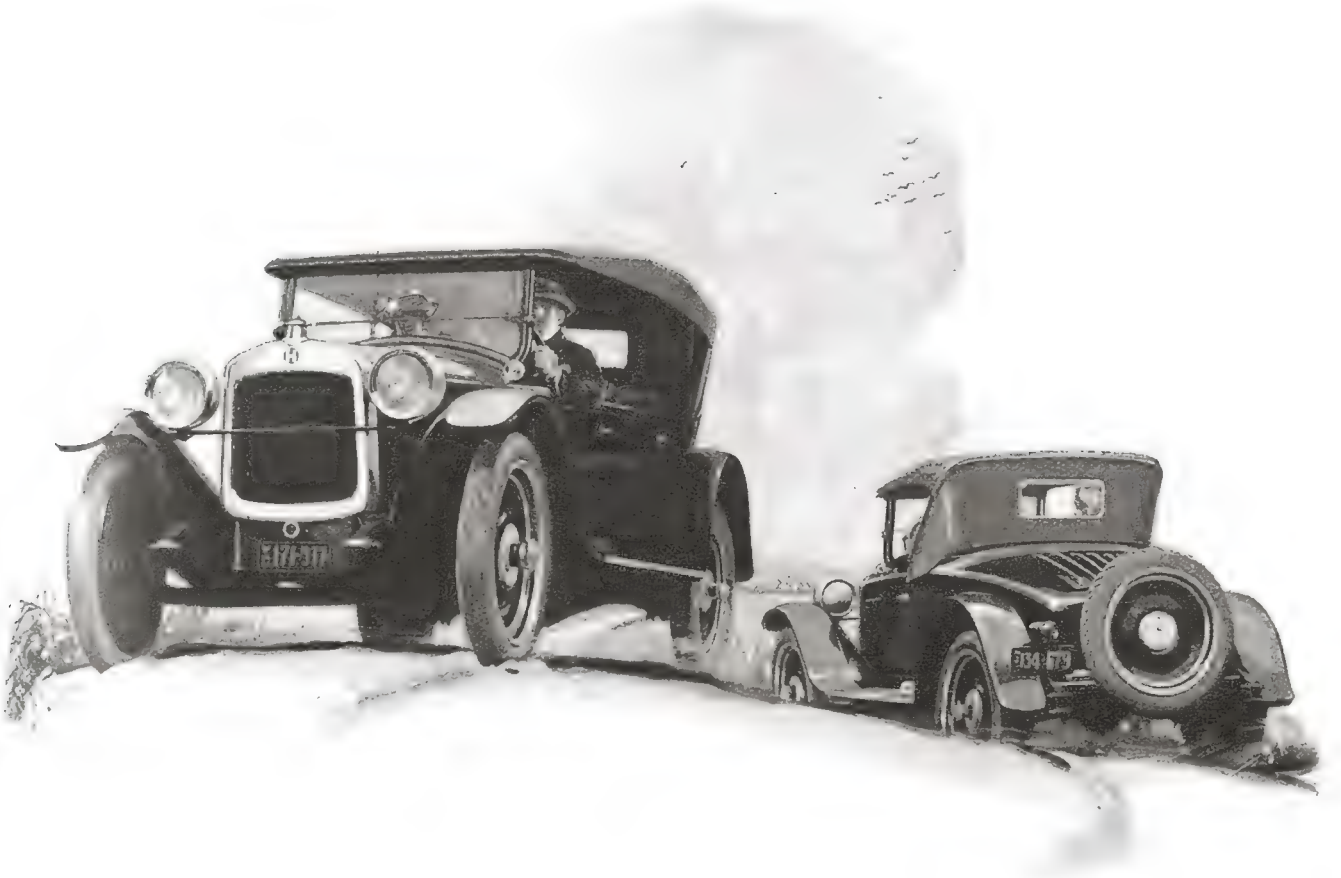
Good God, did they think he was afraid? Even Hayford, without imagination enough to conceive of anyone being different from himself, had been surprised that Owens had come out tonight to look for Lampert.

But was he really looking for Lampert? Nosing aimlessly along the waterways was of no use. With that hushed paddle, he might pass within a hundred yards of the fellow and not be heard. Noise and light were the only avail. But then, noise, light and that lurking something from which even Mela Lot had fled—a shout, the scratch of a match, and whatever might be hidden in the Südd would be upon him!

He shivered, not so much at the thought of death as at the afterward. The actual, physical afterward, since the possible metaphysical hardly troubles youth.

But then again, Lampert; and even a moment's delay might make all the difference. Or suppose something had already happened to him, and Lampert still somehow knew what was going on here? Owens had a fanciful picture of him, floating like one of those fog-wreaths over the swamp still holding that cool smile as he watched this carefully quiet "search."

OWENS wondered if he were going a little insane. Hang the place, and the fellow too! Dead or alive, there seemed no getting away from him. It was becoming a regular obsession. That was one of the things that Marquand had warned them against, those African maggots of



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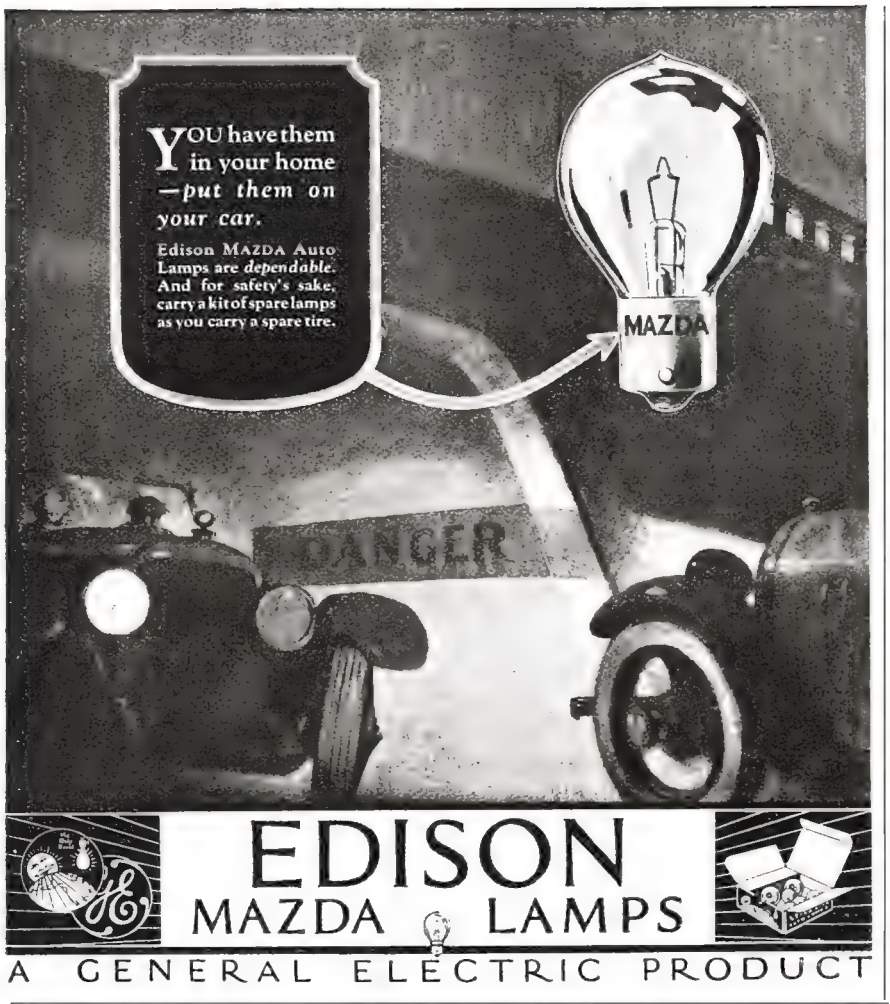
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the mind that crept in and ate one's brain. He could hear again the old explorer's command: "Stamp on them, as you would on a poison spider, for they are really deadlier than those. I have seen projects, expeditions, even budding states, wrecked here by those miasmas of silly hate and antagonism. Stamp on them!"

Owens could believe that, for had he not half seen them, those sneering, prowling shapes looking over the shoulders of his mind? Well, he'd show 'em. With a blistering curse he tore a handful of dried stalks from the papyrus thicket and twisted them into a torch.

"Lampert—o-oh, Lampert!"

A whirl of fire above his head, and the whole dreary place echoing to his shouts:

"Lampert—yo—ho-o-o!"

All the swamp for a mile around must know of his passing. And then—

The Südd struck—struck upward from beneath that shoulder-high mist. Faint grunts, swarming somethings not half Owens' own size. In a sick horror he struck down at them; the canoe tipped.

Water and smothering mud, the fog reddened for an instant before the torch sputtered out. Smooth things, threateningly human, horribly naked — then a blow—

PERHAPS an hour later Owens became conscious again. The moon was up now, casting weird shadows down through the thinning mist. He was crumpled in the bottom of a long canoe, bound hand and foot with thongs of slimy water-weed. About him were dwarfish figures, silent as animals—crouching backs—dip of paddles—drops of dew, viscid as jelly, falling from that enormous alchemy of the night: it must be just some dream from which he would presently awake.

Then a place, a half-solid spot hidden in an added maze of waterways. Fires, some swamp-palms overhead, a penetrating stench which showed the place long used. Flung like a log near one of the fires, Owens rolled over and sat up. Before even he had tossed back the tumbled hair from his eyes, he had stiffened his lips to a grin, for there, before him—was Lampert!

Lampert, bound like himself, his shirt in rags from shoulder to waist, a jagged cut across one temple. A momentary look, driven and desperate; then it was hidden by his habitual cool smile as he encountered Owens' grin.

Owens' dislike of him flared instantly again. Wasn't the fellow even human? Getting a chap out into this hellish mess, and then smiling about it. He'd show him; he couldn't manage that ice-box smile, but he could grin, and he would—grin like a Cheshire cat!

"Hello! I was looking for you," he nodded.

Black arabesques of reeds, the fire-reddened fronds of the swamp palms hanging above them. Swarming creatures, barely four feet high, their naked bodies the color of yellow clay, their faces like simian masks. Owens' flesh chilled, and Lampert's answer came like ringing emptiness upon his ears.

"That was good of you."

Owens managed a shrug of his stiffened shoulders, and another grin.

"What happened?"

"They must have been following us and watching their chance. They were all over us all at once."

"Where's Sammaad?"

Lampert's glance indicated a trussed object lying face downward.

"He is scared to death. He understands something of their talk, and it wasn't cheerful hearing. He says that they will feast all night and not—do anything—until dawn."

Not "do anything;" Owens shook at that, and to cover it from the other's gaze, he wriggled backward, resting his shoulders against a palm-trunk. All around them the chattering creatures watched from eyes like black beads. There was no mercy there, merely intelligence enough for cruelty.

NOT even the pain of Owens' thongs could convince him that it was not some nightmare from which he would presently awake, to find himself perhaps back in that El Monte garage. He thought desperately of that, summoning its remembered atmosphere of grease, gasoline and easy profanity—white people moving securely upon the street—trips for cold rootbeers to the little lattice-work stand across the way. Vain imaginings, for the firmament overhead held its strange stars unchanged, and the night wind rustled the papyrus tassels. And down in that hot hollow between the reeds, the dwarfs tore at decaying meat, their gaze roving over their captives in a lust for the sight of pain.

But there must be some way out of it, if they could only get together. If he could get his hands free. . . . . Just above his head the old leaf butts on the palm-trunk still held their saw edges. If he could rasp those thongs upon them—but there came a warning look from Lampert and an added weariness in his smile.

"They'll simply stick you with their spears," he said, glancing significantly at a bloodstain upon his own leg. "I've thought of it all in these hours, but we must wait. Any attempt would just—hurry them up."

Wait—and for what? Owens' anger smoldered again and the other read it.

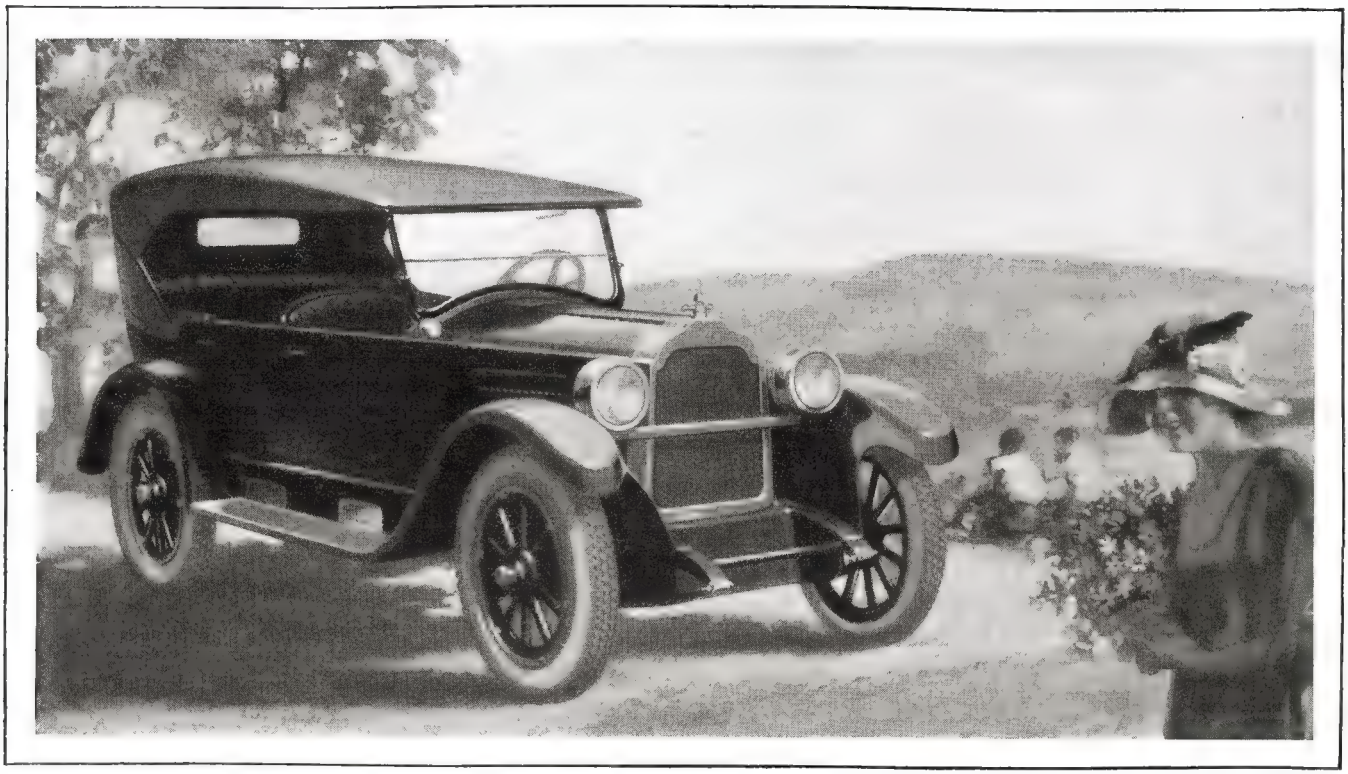
"Really, I am frightfully sorry to have got you into this."

If he had only stopped smiling as he said it. All the growing fury in Owens' mind crystallized round the other. But he must not let Lampert know that, or the fellow would think him afraid—as he was, bitterly afraid. He became aware that, by some odd twist, he was probably most afraid of Lampert suspecting his fear.

It was strange how bound hands and feet stopped one's thinking. Numbed limbs hanging like leaden weights from one's brain, fever-chills down one's spine, and a dazzle of images, all horrible.

Something they must do—but most important of all, Lampert must not suspect. That damned smile! To answer it, he forced a laugh that jarred away over the lapping water channels—perhaps the first time that anyone had ever laughed in that place. He'd show the fellow.

"If we have to sit up, we may as well



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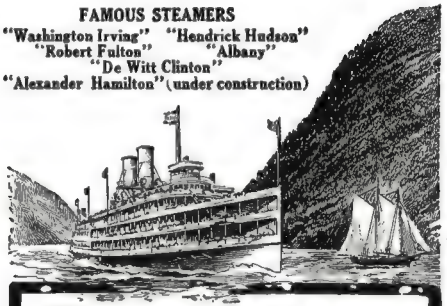

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make a night of it," he heard himself saying in a sort of wild lightness.

It was lucky that he disliked Lampert so; the slightest sympathy would have brought a doubled cringing for the other's flesh as well as his own. What was it they were talking about? He became aware of telling one of the incandescent stories current about that garage, and Lampert capped it with one drawn from the army. Mere sound and a moving jaw, it seemed, but he would know when to laugh. The important thing was to keep one's tongue going and that grin plastered to one's face.

"*Aoora—aoora—*"

That was Sammaad, his thin Zanzibari face a mere setting for eyes like saucers of fear.

"Them Arukai—they talk get big stick, make too sharp, drive through we—"

He added details. Owens' middle contracted as though the stake were already there, but he must keep grinning, for Lampert's frozen smile still held. Had the fellow no feelings at all? The sweat was as icy water dripping from his fingertips, but he forced a tone of contempt.

"Tell them they will have to do better than that to kill *us*—tell them, now."

Knowing what Sammaad had been saying, the dwarfs had drawn closer, eager for a sight of their victims' terror. As the Zanzibari forced some sounds through his clacking teeth, they drew back again for puzzled consultation.

IF only Lampert would face things instead of ignoring them in that silly superior way! Surely something could be done. It was not believable that white blood and intelligence should be at the mercy of these scaly little brutes. But Lampert seemed the prisoner of his own smile, and it was holding Owens too. It seemed that he could not do differently. Probably he was a little mad; Marquand was right—this was how Africa got you.

Sammaad was singing now, wailing his own death-chant, the drawn notes echoing away across the swamp. Overhead the shifting stars ticked off the moments, the moon marked the leaden hours. An obsession of dislike, as though it were a veritable stake driven through Owens, pinning him down! But it was keeping him steady too.

Hours of it; but he could keep it up no longer. There was a dead exhaustion in the back of his brain, reaching black fingers for his eyes. Sleep—come what might, by God, he must have that. With his bound feet, he kicked at the wailing negro.

"Quit that row. Get up and tell those devils to be quiet. I want to sleep."

Then, as Sammaad whimpered and burrowed afresh into the wet earth, Owens turned to the dwarfs, his voice blistering with all the fury too long repressed.

"Shut up, you—"

Lampert's face, paper-white, growing larger as the spreading darkness blotted out everything else. Lampert's words, dripping from his lips like spent rags of tone:

"I'm all in too. Thanks. . . . . Sleep—"

They lurched over, pillowing their heads where they fell. Fire-reddened reeds—, those strange stars, and the filthy dwarfs staring as if at some suspected trap. Then darkness, all-enveloping, without even dreams.

SOMETHING hot and intolerable across his eyes summoned Owens back from that pit of oblivion. A red-hot bar, searing his eyeballs—probably it was dawn, and those beasts had already begun to "do something." He flung up his arm with a choking cry.

He looked, and the world of the Südd sprang into being. Morning, all white light, and the sun beating down upon his face. Motionless reeds, slapping water—nothing else save silence; no dwarfs, but the dying fires proved that their presence had not been the mere nightmare it almost seemed.

Lampert was struggling awake too, and together they sawed their wrists free on the palm-butts. Their hands were almost too swollen to draw a hunting-knife to cut the bonds about their legs.

Neither had spoken as yet, moving as warily as crouching animals. Owens' brain moved as sluggishly as his stiffened limbs; his mind seemed like the place—all aching light and ashes. What a fool he had made of himself last night! And yet the Arukai seemed gone, and the canoe was floating between the papyrus.

There was a bubbling cry coming from somewhere, so persistent that it almost seemed a part of the place itself.

"*Aoora—aoora—aoora—*"

It was Sammaad, behind the reeds there, and they crawled to him. The blood was welling from a spear-thrust in his side, but his face was stoical with the savage acceptance of death. There was nothing to be done for him; his remaining life was barely sufficient for a few whispered words.

"Them Arukai, he go—he too much 'fraid of you—"

"Afraid—how?"

"You been laugh—make talk—curse—sleep—"

"Yes?"

"You no 'fraid—he think you got—big, big *ju-ju*. He go one time—"

That was all; when the swift end was done, Lampert spoke.

"Poor devil! They saw he *was* afraid and they didn't fear his '*ju-ju*.'"

It was all very puzzling. "Laugh—make curse!" Talk and grin! It would almost seem as if it were the inhibitions of the night which had pulled them through. Owens became aware that Lampert was speaking again.

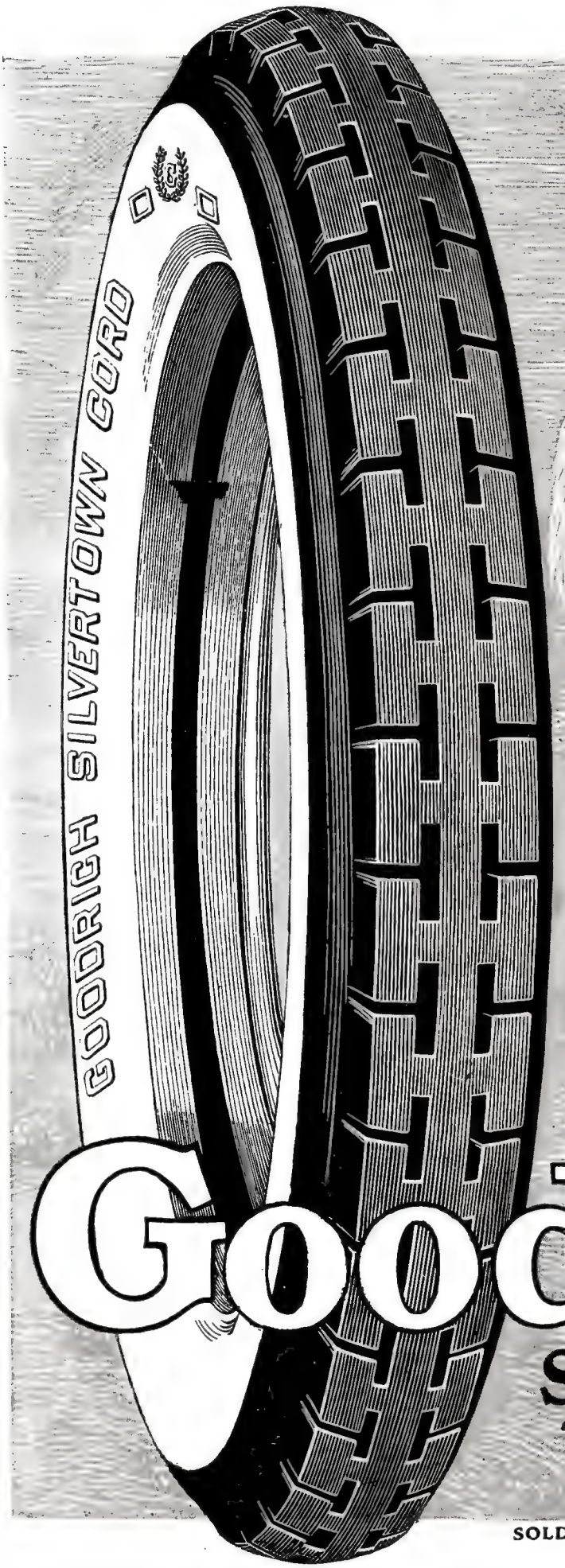
"We may as well have it out, you and I. I owe it to you that I'm alive."

"To me?"

Hot sunlight, and the grim reality of that blue-gray body stretched before them! Owens hung onto those as proof that he was awake, and Lampert continued:

"I knew all along that you saw how I'd lost my nerve. I hated you for it—silly, of course. It was that crash the last time I went up in France that did it. But it was no use telling you; how could you understand it, when you hadn't been through it? That time down in Loanda when you told me of your being exempted—I was afraid you were going to hand me out the usual guff about being 'sorry you didn't get over.' Sorry, that you were kept out of *that*—if you had said it, I believe I'd have soaked you for it."

For the first time it was occurring to Owens that perhaps, to themselves, people



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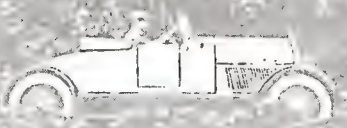

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might not be at all what one imagined them. The realization dripped down into his mind as blisteringly as the sunlight.

"I didn't give in to my nerves," Lampert went on. "I forced myself to go ahead. But I saw your grin each time you stood aside to let me do it. God—how I hated you! And last night, when you sat up with that same grin—oh, I saw you knew how scared I was."

Owens' tongue was loosening, the words coming with a rush.

"You bloomin' fool—you didn't seem human enough to be scared—not like I was. All *I* could think of was how to bluff *you*."

"What!"

Lampert stared, crackling the air with a string of curses. Then a twinkle crept into his gaze.

"Well—between us we seem to have bluffed the Arukai."

Owens would answer that twinkle in a moment, but just now his brain was spinning like a motor thrown into high—fragments of the night's imaginings came back to him: "Something to be done—if they could only get together—face things—" And the strange part was that they had been doing it. He became aware of a boiling under his breast-bone. Tears, laughter, curses all mixed in a strange riot. By common impulse they rose, hobbling away; then came a breathless laugh as they launched themselves at each other.

Over and over, one or the other on top, through ashes, mud and water—pummeling, wrestling, yelling lurid names; never before had that inimical Südd echoed to such a triumph of noise.

At last they sat up, suddenly grave after that safety-valve outburst. Lampert reached for his waterproof cigarette-case, and they smoked in dreamy silence. At last Lampert spoke.

"Say, what in hell were we hating each other about, anyhow?"

With a long inhalation Owens made answer:

"Damned if I know."

BUTTON, BUTTON

(Continued from page 60)

other disqualifications, Kernochan was a snob. And I fear that my careless mention of certain names highly placed in international society had given the Kernochans a false idea of my own social position. They were not going to let depart, too easily, one who might graciously open doors forever barred to a certain class of broker, and to detectives.

At dinner Miss Kernochan wore her ruby ring. I had not invested in a motor-car, nor in a golf-match with Vantine, in vain. Before dinner was half over, Kernochan, learning of tomorrow's match, insisted that I must spend the night in his house. I could offer no valid excuse; and so upon my acceptance, the matter was settled.

Not until, Miss Kernochan and myself having lost a rubber, we were cutting again for partners, did I appear to notice the ruby ring.

"I see that you've had the setting fixed," I then remarked.

Kernochan nodded. "Daragon's offered me three hundred and twenty-five thousand for that ring," he declared. "But it aint for sale. I guess my girl is good enough to have a ring like that for herself."

She simpered, not prettily. I could not but contrast this insolent and common-looking woman with the sweetly dignified lady from whom, by chicanery, the ring had been taken.

I whistled. "Three hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars!" I exclaimed. "It doesn't seem possible. Still, it *is* beautiful." I leaned over, looking at the stone. Miss Kernochan did the obvious thing. She slipped the ring from her finger and handed it to me. Now, I had not intended to put into effect certain plans, which had brought me to this house, so soon. But a storm had been brewing during dinner; it burst now with a clap of thunder and a flash of lightning. And a moment later the lights in the library went out. Miss Kernochan screamed in alarm. Her father laughed. "They'll be on again in a minute, Alice," he told her. "This often happens during a storm, Mr. Ainsley," he said to me.

I made some reply, trying to keep my voice from shaking. For under cover of the darkness I was substituting the paste ring which Mrs. Adams had so sweetly loaned me, for the Grand Duke's ruby.

BUT in the darkness my fingers were clumsy. True, I managed to put the genuine stone in my waistcoat pocket, but the imitation slipped from my grasp, and fell upon the table.

"What was that?" asked Miss Kernochan nervously as the ring hit the table-top.

"I dropped your ring; I am sorry," I replied.

As I spoke, the lights came on again. The ring was not upon the table. For a moment there was silence; then Vantine's pop eyes grew hard.

"I don't see the ruby, Mr. Ainsley," he said suspiciously.

"It must be upon the floor," I replied. I tried to keep my voice steady, but failed lamentably. At any rate, Vantine crossed the room, and before I realized his intention, had locked the one door of the room.

"It will *have* to be on the floor," he said.

I stared at him. "What do you mean?" I demanded.

"Nothing—if the ring is on the floor," he retorted.

I will say for the Kernochans that they were embarrassed by the sudden situation. The daughter spoke. "Of course it's on the floor, Ernest. We'll find it—"

"You bet we will," asserted Vantine.

I had not liked him before; I hated him now. Yet, trying to assume an air of injured innocence, I joined the others in their search. And there was no make-believe in my aid. I knew that unless one of us found the imitation ring, I would not be permitted to leave this house. I would be searched, and that might be dangerous.

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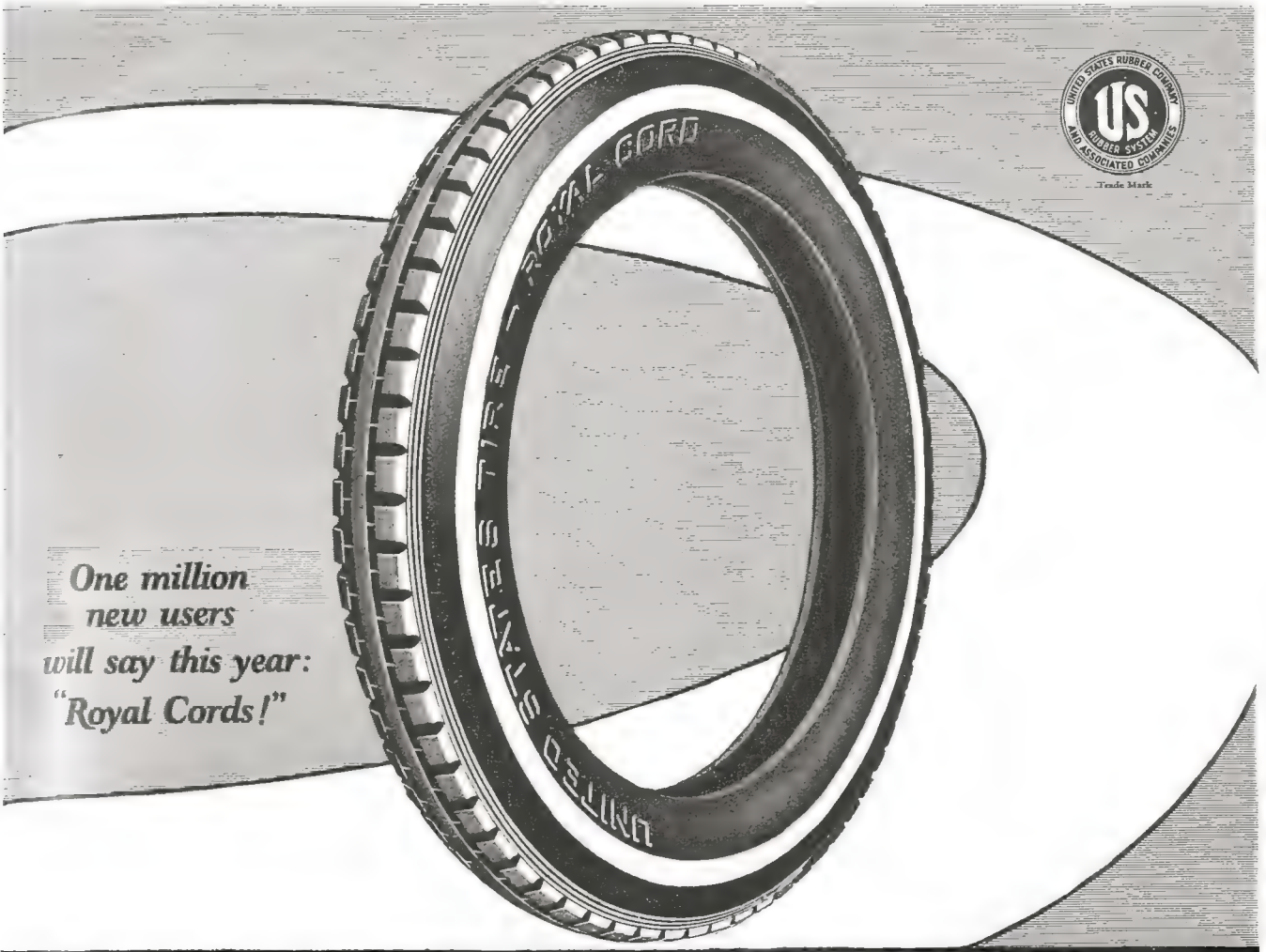

If this happens to be the year you come over to Royal Cords

THERE'S not much difference between the way a man buys his first U.S. Royal Cord and the way he buys any other tire.

But there comes a time a little later when he thinks back to see how he came to ask for a Royal Cord.

And why he didn't do it sooner.

* * *

If 1923 happens to be the year you come over to Royal Cords you are likely to notice this—

You didn't buy Royal Cords on the strength of any advertised extravagant mileages.

The makers of Royal Cords believe in letting each tire user make his own comparisons on his own car. That provides every man with the facts in the form most useful to him.

You didn't buy Royal Cords on an impulse. The conviction that the Royal Cord is a good tire had been growing with you for some time.

You didn't buy Royal Cords merely because they are the product of the largest rubber organization in the world.

More than anything else, it has been the simple, understandable policies of the Royal Cord people that have made the Royal Cord seem a tire of personal responsibility.

* * *

It has been the growing understanding among men that Royal Cord value conscientiously out-tops all other tire values today.

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Yet after fifteen minutes in which all four of us had combed the rugs and the corners of the room, Vantine straightened up.

"Well, we've given you a fair chance, Ainsley," he said. "Now we'll really look for it." He advanced toward me.

I blustered, but he cried me down. His hands were reaching for me, and I cursed the greediness that had made me retain the ring. I could have slipped it out of my pocket at any time during this past quarter of an hour, but I had been certain that we would find the paste copy. And then, just as I was tightening my muscles, prepared to fight my way out of the situation from which wit had failed to extricate me, Kernochan cried out in excitement. He was wearing an informal sort of evening dress, a baggy affair of heavy material, the dinner suit of a man who wishes to accent the difference between night and day, but who also wishes to be extremely comfortable. The soft material had cuffs on sleeves and trousers, and into one of these latter my paste ring had fallen. Kernochan bent over and retrieved it. There was an embarrassed silence, during which my pulse stood still. Then Vantine grinned feebly.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Ainsley," he said sheepishly.

I stared at him. "I fear that it cannot be granted," I said stiffly. I turned to my host. "You will forgive me if, under the circumstances, I am forced to withdraw my acceptance of your invitation to spend the night."

It was a situation to which Kernochan was unequal. He had been just as suspicious of me as his prospective son-in-law, and he had not the tact wherewith to meet my attitude. He looked helplessly at Vantine. I also looked at Vantine.

"Unlock the door," I ordered the detective.

He shrugged, flushed more redly, and walked to the door. The key was almost in the lock when his fiancée screamed.

"This isn't *my* ruby," she cried.

FOR all his clumsy bulk, Vantine was quick of movement. Key in hand, he leaped to her side. "It's an imitation," he declared. He glared at me. "Very clever—almost clever enough, my sneak-thief! But you're dealing with Ernest Vantine. Now, will you be searched here or at the police station?"

I flatter myself that it is in moments like this that I rise to my greatest heights. I simulated a weary contempt. I walked across the room, and if my brain seethed with wrath at myself because I had been fool enough to think that the imitation could deceive people who had held the original in their hands a moment before, I do not believe that my face reflected my thoughts.

Upon the table lay a vanity bag that Miss Kernochan had carried. I put myself between my three accusers and the table, half turning, as I did so. My right hand was hidden from their view for less than a quarter of a second, yet that was time enough for me to effect a transfer of the Grand Duke's ruby from my waistcoat pocket to the vanity bag. Then, contemptuously, facing them all, I told Vantine to search me.

AN hour later Vantine gave it up. He had summoned the butler, sent his fiancée from the room, and the three men had stripped me. Failing to discover the authentic ring, they had repeatedly searched the room. But Miss Kernochan had taken her vanity bag with her when she left the room. I could only pray that in the excitement she would forget to powder her nose. And when at length Vantine and Kernochan despaired of finding the ring, they sent the butler for the young woman. In my presence they held a council of war, and the upshot of their conversation was that Vantine started for the telephone, to call the police. Speaking mildly, I stopped him.

"Of course you understand," I said, "that I shall bring suit for criminal slander and for false imprisonment. It seems to me that a man in my position ought to be able to collect substantial damages—say, a quarter of a million."

"A damned sneak-thief would collect nothing," snarled Vantine. Yet he paused.

"Quite true," said I. "But we are not discussing a criminal; we are discussing a gentleman of position."

"You have that ring; at least, you know where it is," declared Vantine. "It didn't vanish into thin air. And this is paste." He indicated the copy which lay upon the card table.

"And aside from the large sum which I shall certainly collect as damages," I went on, calmly, "there is something else to be considered. You are the head of a famous detective-agency which bears your name. If you declare that I have stolen a ring in your very presence, and are unable to prove the theft,—and you can only prove it by finding the ring,—what sort of an advertisement will it be for your agency?"

I let this sink in; I enjoyed the expression on Vantine's face. Pop-eyed men should never permit themselves to look angry. They are unbeautiful at best, and at their worst they are extremely offensive.

"You don't think we're going to let you go?" blustered Vantine.

"I don't think it; I know it," I replied. "And if this nonsense ceases at once, I shall let the matter drop. Otherwise—" My pause was a threat.

I saw the cunning in Vantine's eyes. Yet I despised him so thoroughly that I underrated his abilities. He whispered a moment with Kernochan, but I thought that they were merely arguing the advisability of risking the suit which I threatened to bring. So, when Vantine turned to me and gruffly stated that I was at liberty to leave, I bowed, and in turning to go, abstracted the ring from the vanity bag which Miss Kernochan had placed again upon the table. Oh, I was still an amateur in those days. Also, I was too confident in my own wit, and too given to contemptuous appraisal of the wit of others. For, just as we reached the door, Vantine said:

"I think we'd better search you once again, Ainsley."

I suppose I went white. I should have known that no one but an utter fool would have permitted me to depart so easily, and Vantine read my horror. He turned to his fiancée.

At the end of the dance

FROM the ballroom floated the strains of a waltz, and from out beyond came the sleepy night-sounds—the late call of a bird, the faint whispering of leaves in the summer breeze.

The man watched the woman before him in the mellow glow of the lanterns, drinking in her loveliness with eyes that could not leave her face.

"What is it?" she asked softly. "You look as if you were in a dream."

"I think this is a dream, and you a dream woman," he answered; "for I never saw anyone so lovely! There is something that makes you stand entirely alone, in a delicate, glowing radiance. I think the greatest charm of all is your wonderful coloring."

The last notes of the waltz were quivering into silence. "That is the end," she said. "I think it is the beginning," he answered, still watching her.

"I think it is the beginning," he answered—

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When you use the Pompeian Beauty Trio you can feel assured that your skin is always fresh and glowing, and that it will remain so almost indefinitely.

Pompeian Day Cream is a vanishing cream that is absorbed by the skin, protecting it from dust, wind and sun. The delicate film that remains on the surface after the Day Cream has disappeared holds powder and rouge so well that constant re-powdering is unnecessary.

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Use the Pompeian Trio together for Instant Beauty; for great care has been taken that all Pompeian Preparations blend perfectly.

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Mary Pickford, the world's most adored woman, has again honored Pompeian Beauty Preparations by granting the exclusive use of her portrait for the new 1923 Pompeian Beauty Panel. The beauty and charm of Miss Pickford are faithfully portrayed in the dainty colors of this panel. Size 28 x 7¼ inches.

For 10 cents we will send you all of these:

1. The 1923 Mary Pickford Pompeian Beauty Panel as described above. (Would cost from 50c to 75c in an art store.)
2. Sample of Pompeian Day Cream (vanishing).
3. Sample of Pompeian Beauty Powder.
4. Sample of Pompeian Bloom (non-breaking rouge).
5. Sample of Pompeian Night Cream.

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The Girl Who Was Out of Date

By MME. JEANNETTE

Not long ago I had a call from a young friend. She came in wearily and sank into a chair. The brilliant afternoon sunlight fell full on her face, and I was appalled when I saw how pale she looked.

"What is the matter?" I asked, expecting to be told that she was ill.

"Oh, I'm just tired," she said; so tired I don't care how I look."

I was so indignant that for a moment I could not speak. There is no possible excuse for such an attitude!

To make the best of herself is the conceded duty of every woman, young or old; and a modish gown means very little when her complexion is uncared for.

"Come here," I said to her, "and let me see what I can do for you."

First I used a vanishing cream, gently patting it into the skin. This was Pompeian Day Cream. I always use this, for it leaves only a faint creamy film on the surface and holds powder and rouge so well. Next a coating of the soft, clinging Beauty Powder. Then a bit of rouge blended downward and outward from the cheekbone; dusting over all with a last touch of the powder. And this I had done to only *one side* of her face!

I turned her around to face the mirror. You never saw anyone so surprised! She looked and looked, turning from side to side; and I don't wonder, for she saw two entirely different girls, and one was so much lovelier it seemed incredible.

"That is what you can make of yourself every day, and it will take only a few minutes," I told her.

I couldn't help laughing at her astonishment; she had never had an idea she could be so pretty. She realized now the mistake she had been making, and watched with the keenest interest, while I made the other side of her face just as charming, adding at the last a touch of Pompeian Lip Stick.

She didn't say very much, but all the afternoon I saw her eyes straying toward the mirror. I hoped then that she would profit by my little lesson, and I know now that she did, for I've never seen her looking pale and weary since.

Jeannette

Specialiste de Beauté

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"If you'll leave us again, Alice, we'll search this man."

"But you have searched him," she said, bewildered.

VANTINE smirked. "I am dealing with a desperate criminal, Alice. But Ainsley is dealing with a detective of some reputation. Would a criminal, as daring as this man, leave this house without the object for which he has risked his liberty? Certainly not. Look at his face. The ring is somewhere in this room; he picked it up—"

"Oh, end this farce!" I cried. I stretched my hands wide. The girl was seated in a chair. She wore an elaborate coiffure, piled high upon her head. In the depression above her crown, formed by a coil of chestnut hair—her only attractive possession—I placed the Grand Duke's ring. My hands were quicker than their eyes, and I stepped closer to Vantine, saying wearily: "Search me!"

Twenty minutes later I was dressed again. Miss Kernochan had returned. She had sat down again in the chair. I had plucked the ring from her hair and it reposed snugly in my waistcoat pocket once again. Yes, in those days I was an amateur; but I leave it to you who read my memoirs, to decide whether or not I showed, even at the outset of my career, flashes of that genius which since have rendered me incomparable.

"Let's talk this over," suggested Kernochan. He made a wry mouth. "You have us on the hip, Mr. Ainsley. But you must realize that you can never take the ring out of this room. And we are convinced that it is somewhere in this room."

"So am I," I declared. "I think it's about time that you and I searched Vantine."

Vantine laughed, but there was anger in his mirth. "You're welcome, Mr. Kernochan," he said.

But the suggestion was too absurd for Kernochan to entertain. I give you my word, had Vantine been searched I would have found the ring upon him. But in that event I might have lost the ruby ring.

"Let's sit down, have some coffee and talk this over," persisted Kernochan. "I wont use harsh words, Mr. Ainsley. But that ring is here. You brought a paste copy—"

I raised my hand. "All of this, Mr. Kernochan, this unfounded libel, will be paid for in court."

"I don't want a lawsuit any more than you want a criminal prosecution," he said. "And we'll hardly have one without the other. But I do want the ring." He ordered the butler, who had assisted in the second search of me, to bring coffee. "We're all excited and under a strain, and a cup of coffee will help us to look at the matter sensibly."

The butler left; I sat down. "Go ahead," I said to Kernochan.

He argued, pleaded and threatened. I was adamant. I told him that I had been insulted, and that if my departure were much longer impeded, I would have satisfaction in the courts. The butler entered, bringing coffee. I refused to partake, and started boldly for the door. Vantine leaped to his feet.

"You can't go," he cried.

I turned and advanced to the table on which were set the cups of coffee. I guessed, I thought, his intention.

"I suppose," I said, "that you are going to search me again."

I really thought that he was; mind you, the man was beside himself in wrathful humiliation. Only the fear that I might after all be what I claimed to be, and the fear of ridicule which I had promised, restrained him. But I did not know that he would be restrained, and so I slipped the ring into a cup of coffee—not, however, into the cup that had been set at the vacant place at the table which was meant for me: I slipped it into Vantine's.

He colored furiously. He felt as ridiculous as he was. "No, I'm not going to search you," he almost roared.

I bowed to him. "In that case," I said, "I shall drink Mr. Kernochan's coffee."

SOMETHING within me gave warning; instead of picking up Vantine's cup, I chose the one meant for me. And before I could put it to my lips, Vantine's fingers gripped my wrist.

"So, that's where you hid it!" he cried.

"Don't be absurd, Ernest," said Miss Kernochan petulantly. "The coffee was just brought in."

But Vantine must have seen something triumphant in my eyes, for he poured the coffee out, part of it, into the saucer, and then groped in the liquid remaining in the cup. Then, forgetful of the presence of his fiancée, he cursed angrily.

"If all detectives are as stupid as you, Vantine," I told him, "I wonder that more people don't go in for theft." I reached for his cup. "I don't propose to be denied my drink because you are a jackass," I remarked. With that I put his cup to my lips; the ruby ring passed into my mouth; I put the cup down, and wiped my mouth with a napkin. A second later the ruby ring had once again returned to my waistcoat pocket. I nodded coldly to Kernochan and his daughter.

"Now, then," I said to Vantine, "if you will kindly unlock the door, I will go upstairs, get my things and leave."

The sweat stood on Kernochan's forehead, but he nodded to Vantine to acquiesce in my demand. The detective opened the door for me; I walked calmly through it, and began mounting the stairs in the hall outside.

Now, I have said that at this period in my career I was an amateur. This account of my recklessness is proof that I tell the truth. But do not do me the injustice to suppose that I thought for one minute that, though I was permitted to leave the room, I would be permitted to leave the house. I heard the telephone click as I set my foot on the first step. Rather than risk a brawl, I would be permitted to go upstairs. By the time I would have packed my bags, policemen would be in the house. Only Vantine's pride had caused this much delay in summoning the police. For their arrival meant publicity and consequent ridicule, in the press, for the great detective who must call in village policemen to recover a jewel stolen under his eyes. But Van-

"And then he looked up"

MANY YEARS AGO in the court of a king lived a humble man named Damocles.

He envied the king's luxury and power, and, above all, his freedom from the worries that prey upon other men.

One day, to his surprise and delight, the king exchanged places with him.

Eagerly Damocles ascended the throne, drew his robes about him and smiled.

And then he looked up and smiled no longer.

Swinging by a single hair above his head was a sharp-pointed heavy sword!

WHAT is *your* sword of Damocles? Is it, Mr. President, the repeated disappointment of subordinates who are incapable of assuming responsibility? Is it the pressure of expenses that are forever threatening to exceed the monthly income? Is it the unpleasant reminder that men whose start in business was no more favorable than yours have far outdistanced you? Is it lack of confidence in yourself born of an imperfect business training?

These are very personal questions which no outsider has the right to press, and only you can answer. They are set down upon this page for one reason—and one only—because the Alexander Hamilton Institute is dedicated to the task of removing the swords that menace men's happiness.

The sword that hangs over presidents

The Institute *can* remove, and *has* removed, the sword that hangs over Presidents—the depressing consciousness that the Company's growth is retarded because its men do not grow.

"The good that our people have received from the Modern Business Course is tremendous," the Vice-President of a $52,000,000 Corporation writes.

And the President of another great Company said:

"When I learned that fifty of our men had enrolled with the Alexander Hamilton Institute, the stock of our Company went up, in my estimation, at least ten points."

The sword of financial worry

The Institute *can* remove and *has* removed, the sword of financial worry.

"I was manager of a branch office when I enrolled for the Modern Business Course and Service," a man wrote recently. "My salary was $2,200 and our home life was a constant struggle. Today I am assistant sales manager with a salary of $7,000 and I feel that my progress has only just begun."

"During the past two years my salary has increased over 400%," another man writes. He is still in his early thirties and an officer of his Company. "This has been due to our rather remarkable increase in sales, but this increase is the indirect result of the ideas I received from your Course."

The sword of dissatisfaction

The Institute *can* remove, and *has* removed, the sword of dissatisfaction.

"For years I made no progress; I was merely keeping the wolf from the door." This from a man who was manager of a telegraph office in a small city. "It was your book 'Forging Ahead in Business' that gave me the first real ray of hope." He is now secretary of a large shoe manufacturing company.

There are nearly 200,000 self-confident men who have a very warm feeling of gratitude for the book "Forging Ahead in Business."

More than 30,000 of these are presidents, and every president ought to have a copy in his library. More than 31,000 are vice-presidents, secretaries or treasurers, and the book is for such men, but not for them alone. Somewhere in the roll of the 200,000 are men whose salary and position in business were precisely like yours, whose sword was *your* sword, and who found in "Forging Ahead in Business" the key to the things they wanted most—larger income, larger opportunity, larger self-confidence.

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tine's pride was not too elastic; it had snapped now. He would risk ridicule, and Kernochan would risk a libel suit. The jewel was worth these risks.

Yet, knowing what they were doing, I managed to restrain myself until I reached my room. Then I acted as swiftly as ever a man, in a similar predicament, could hope to act. I snatched up hat and coat, crossed my room in a bound, threw open the French window that led to a balcony, and vaulted to the ground twelve feet below. True, I risked a broken leg, but it was only a chance. Arrest meant certain imprisonment. My recent past could afford no disclosures. And luck was with me. I was shaken up, but uninjured. In thirty seconds I was in the garage, at the wheel of my car. Cries from the house—they had heard my impact with the ground—alarmed a lounging chauffeur. But he was not quick enough; I was away at once.

And I was not captured. I reached New York, abandoned my car, purchased clothing—even late at night it is possible to buy apparel in the great city—and within an hour after that I had eliminated, I felt certain, any possibility of capture. For I am of undistinguished appearance, and the description meant for me would fit a thousand other men.

Yes, I was safe—safe, I mean, from the pursuit of the clumsy Vantine and the ex-policemen who make up the staff of his agency. But I was not safe from something else.

Once again I tell you that at this time I was an amateur, cursed with sentiment—aye, sentimentality. For I could not help but think of the sweet-faced widow in Boston. The Grand Duke's ring should have been hers. Somehow I felt that I had robbed her, not the grossly rich Benjamin Kernochan. And so—I turned the ruby into cash, engaged a discreet lawyer, and Mrs. Henry Adams learned that certain stock which she did not know belonged to her husband was hers. She lives, I believe, in comparative luxury upon a farm in Massachusetts. She should live well; the income from one hundred and fifty thousand dollars—the price paid me for the Grand Duke's ruby by a dealer in stolen stones—is ample for a widowed lady of simple tastes.

Yes, I was an amateur. Thank God, I had not yet forgotten that I was also a gentleman.

The adventure of the Grand Duke's ruby had cost me money, instead of showing me a profit. Yet if by that adventure I was lighter in my pocket, I was also light in heart, thinking of Mrs. Adams, as I sailed the following week for Europe.

Another exploit of this adroit thief from thieves will be described by Arthur Somers Roche in an early issue of *The Red Book Magazine*.

THE ILLICIT LADY

(Continued from page 86)

CALENDARS mark this date in black, as the Saturday of the Sacrilege. Men yet speak fiercely of the outrage that occurred, gritting their teeth and clenching their futile fists. If Vicksburg had only known that her battlegrounds were being baptized anew, that twenty schoolboys were spilling gallons of champagne on the summit of Castle Hill, if dry throats had but felt a premonition that extra dry was flowing free—if Vicksburg had only known these matters, Aunt Cannie would have had a riotous following, instead of leading three apparently aimless and unexcited persons.

When the old woman stepped from the office-building into Washington Street, she started southward at her accustomed gait, and drew no prying glances. Neither did Harry Madison, who followed at half a block. And nobody noticed the Creeper or Saugsbee, strolling separately in the same direction.

But the detectives noticed everything. They watched a barelegged negro woman go clambering up Castle Hill, like a mountain goat, and beckon for the puffing lawyer to follow when she disappeared over the crest.

"Hope she aint going to get another baby," Saugsbee grinned, as though it hurt him somewhere on the inside.

The level top of Castle Hill covers several acres. When Harry Madison gained the summit, he saw Aunt Cannie running toward a thicket of Cherokee roses, but could see nothing to account for the woman's hysteria until he stumbled over a box, a champagne-case branded like the eight that were hid in his own attic. It had been broken open and rifled. Near it lay a still-dripping bottle of Baudelot Frères. Now he comprehended. Aunt Cannie's warehouse had been raided.

Rushing forward to catch the flying woman, he crossed a little ridge behind which a dozen boys were crouching, playing at soldiers in their trenches. Another group, also in military formation, attacked them and opened fire. Bang! Bang! Bang! the opposing forces popped away at each other—shooting with champagne corks.

The astounded lawyer halted and stared at these screeching young demons who were reënacting the siege of Vicksburg, and using Baudelot Frères for their bombardment.

"Here! Boy! Don't waste that. *Don't!*"

"Git out o' my way," the youngster shouted. "Here comes the main Yankee general." Bang went the cork. The precious wine foamed out. Two boys clinched and rolled over. From their death-grapple Madison rescued an effervescing quart and demanded: "Where'd you get this?"

"Over yonder. In them bushes."

THE excited Aunt Cannie had paid no heed to these atrocities. She ran straight on and plunged into a thorny thicket. Tearing through behind her, like a bear through a canebrake, Madison found the woman standing beside a rubble of brick and mortar and half-charred timbers that marked the site of the ancient castle cellar.

"Here's de place, Mr. Harry." She

This busy Corona store is located at 72 East Randolph St., in the heart of the Loop district, Chicago

See the New Corona today!

IT is the newest development in typewriters—a complete office typewriter in *portable* form—with every modern improvement, yet so inexpensive that every home can own one. Note these three points of superiority!

Speed: The Standard Portable Keyboard, with right and left shift keys, cannot be surpassed for simplicity and swiftness of operation.

Convenience: Automatic Ribbon Reverse, Two-Color Ribbon, Extra Wide Carriage (10 inch), complete visibility of writing—everything you would expect in a big, heavy machine. Foreign language or technical keyboards at no extra cost.

Strength: Corona is built to stand rough usage—Coronas have been dropped from every kind of conveyance, including an airplane, yet there is no record of a Corona frame ever having been broken! Corona is the only portable whose sturdiness has been tested by 16 years of use. More Coronas are in use than all other makes of portbales combined.

Look for "Corona" in your phone book, or write us for our new, illustrated folder. Price $50 with case. In Canada $69.

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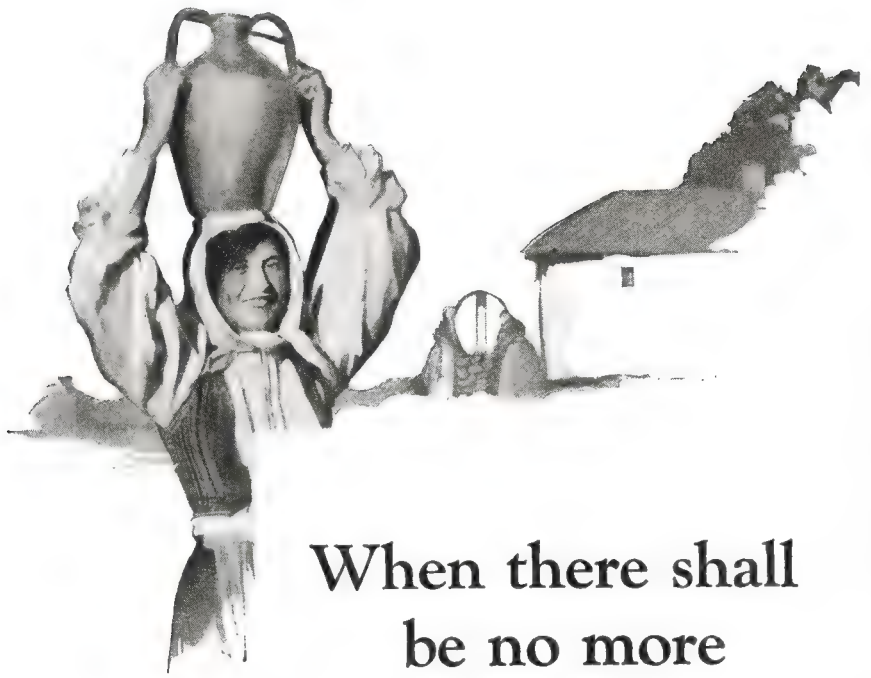


When there shall be no more Marthas

Every town has its Marys and Marthas. Mary is freed from household drudgery; Martha is "cumbered about much serving."

Some day all the world will realize that most house work can be done by little electric motors, costing 3 cents an hour to run. Then there will be no more Marthas.

This monogram is the symbol of General Electric Company, an organization of 100,000 men and women engaged in producing and improving the tools by which electricity does *your* work.

GENERAL ELECTRIC

Can You Make a "Swallow Dive"?

HAVEN'T you often watched someone else with secret envy? And of course you can learn not only this but other thrilling water "stunts", under the care of expert swimmers and teachers who remove the element of danger, at a Summer Camp specializing in water sports.

Do not let another summer go by without experiencing the joys of life in the open, with the companionship of pals your own age.

Write and tell us what phase of camp life most appeals to you and we will gladly help you select the camp that meets your needs. State whether for boy or girl, location desired and other essentials. Enclose stamped return envelope and address:

The Director, Camp Information Department

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE, 33 W. 42nd St., New York City

clutched his arm and pointed to a cavity in the rubble. "It's buried in dere."

"What's buried? The wine?"

"No!" Aunt Cannie almost screamed. "Wine don't 'mount to shucks. I'm talkin' 'bout ol' Marster's things."

"What things? What things?" A totally unexpected voice, a stranger's voice, came from behind her, and the startled woman turned to see a man crawling out from the thicket, a disreputable man, his white clothes soiled and torn, his face scratched with briars. And before Mr. Andrew Balfour had time to straighten up, Aunt Cannie pounced upon him, beating the intruder back with both fists and shrieking: "Make dis man git away, Mr. Harry! Make him git away!"

"Stop! Stop!" Madison held off the demented creature, while he asked: "Mr. Balfour, what are you doing here?"

"Pardon me, sir, I was trying to make sure of this spot."

"Which spot?" The desperate negro woman thrust herself between the two white men. "What *you* got to do wid dis spot?"

"According to my diagram," the boy answered, "Major Robb must have buried his valuables in that cellar." Then Madison saw a time-stained paper in Balfour's hand as his client explained: "Mr. Madison, I misled you. These valuables were not buried in Jackson, but here, on Castle Hill. And I've been looking for the place."

"You got no business lookin'," Aunt Cannie snapped.

"Why not? This hill was my grandfather's home."

"*Yo'* grampa?" The old woman scanned his face, longingly but unconvinced, and demanded: "Mister, ef you knows so much, jes tell me who buried dem things?"

"Here are their names." Balfour read from his paper: "'Ephraim Robb, Abe Holloway and Caroline Robb.'"

The crone had quieted into a tense stillness, and Madison did not realize what was happening until she mumbled:

"Yes. Yes. Dat's de way ol' Major writ it down. Mister, yo' paper's got dat right. Ca'line Robb, she's *me*. Eph an' Abe is bofe dead."

"Oh!" Eagerly young Balfour caught her hand. "Then you may be the Caroline that my mother used to speak of?"

"Mebbe so. Mebbe so. But answer me dis—what was yo' ma's name? All of it?"

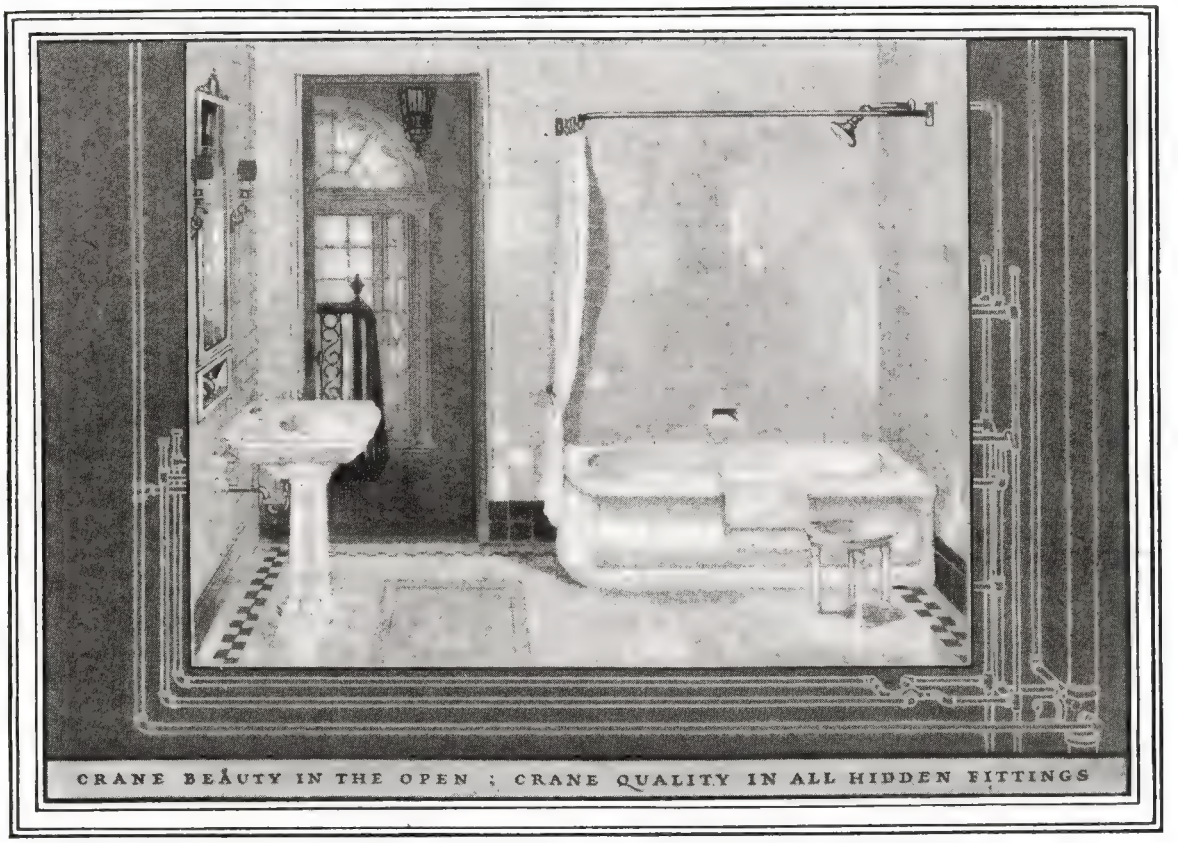
"Marion Savannah Caroline Robb."

"*Miss Vanna's boy!* Miss Vanna's boy! De Lord be praised! I knowed you was comin' back! I knowed it! Jest foller me, honey, an' git what belongs to you."

SAUGSBEE and the Creeper had crawled near enough to see Aunt Cannie lead the stranger and Harry Madison into some sort of cave. This had once been the entrance to the castle cellar, now choked by an avalanche of fallen bricks. Madison scrambled down into the darkness and lighted a torch from the straw covering of champagne bottles. By its ruddy glow he saw Aunt Cannie already taking up a spade and pickax from the corner.

"Did you bring them here?" he asked.

"No. Dem devilish boys fotch 'em.



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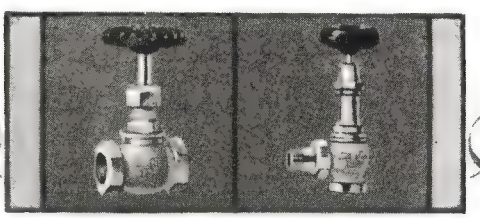

Globe Valve No. 1-B *Radiator Valve No. 220*

Dorothy Dodd

Faultless Fitting Footwear

Exceptionally smart is the "La Paix," as shown at Dorothy Dodd Agencies in White Glacé Kid with turn sole and medium Louis heel.

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ENJOYABLE, because faultless fitting—and comfortable, yet styled in the mode of the moment: And for your greater assurance in buying, every genuine "Dorothy Dodd" style, every Dorothy Dodd PEDO-PRAXIC patented flexible arch shoe, and every "Little Dorothy" style for children bears the Trade Mark stamped on the sole.

Illustrated style guide with your dealer's name free on request.

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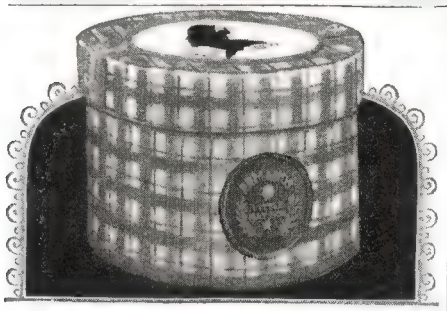

ARMAND

COLD CREAM POWDER

In The LITTLE·PINK·& WHITE·BOXES

THERE'S a beautiful ideal back of the Armand toilet aids—the sincere belief that they will bring the joy of an attractive appearance to every woman.

So many women write us every day of the genuine happiness that Armand Cold Cream Powder is bringing them that we want you to try it, too.

For 25c, we will send you an Armand Week-end Package, containing a generous box of genuine Armand Cold Cream Powder—that marvelous powder, so soft and smooth and wonderfully adherent; three other delightful Armand powders; a tiny box of rouge; cold cream; vanishing cream; talcum, a little cake of fragrant soap and the Armand "Creed of Beauty." You will love it! Send for yours to-day.

ARMAND—Des Moines

A Music School? The country's finest advertise in The Red Book Magazine and you cannot go astray in selecting a school from page sixteen. They invite correspondence. If you need help in making a selection, we shall be glad to advise you. Enclose stamped envelope and address:

The Director, School Department

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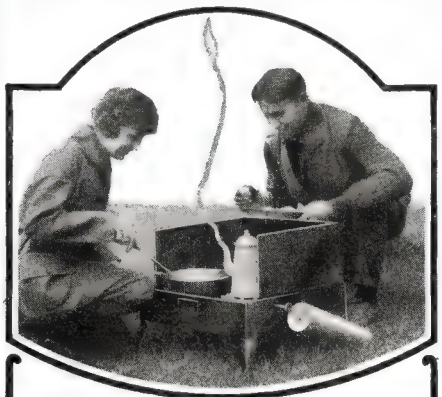

Going Camping?

Let the Kampkook supply the home cooking convenience of your gas stove.

It's All Inside Compact and handy to carry. When not in use all parts pack inside case, protected against loss or breakage.

AMERICAN KAMPKOOK THE IDEAL CAMP STOVE

Set up and going full blast in a jiffy. Makes its own gas from motor gasoline. Burns a hot blue flame; no smoke, soot or odor. Simple, dependable, wind proof, safe anywhere. Used by a half million campers. Six styles: $7.50 to $15.60. Write for catalog of Kampkooking necessities.

American Gas Machine Co., Inc.
827 Clark St., Albert Lea, Minn.

I heered dem boys say dey was aimin' to dig up some robbers' gold. So I run for you. Fetch dat light!" she ordered, so peremptorily that Madison obeyed.

"Now move dem boxes."

From the northeast corner of a square chamber carved out of the dirt, the men flung aside a pile of champagne-cases, and Aunt Cannie's quivering finger pointed to the bare earth.

"Dig!"

Above the diggers she stood erect, her clawlike hand holding aloft the torch. Her body swayed like a gaunt weed in the wind while Madison drove his pick and Balfour threw out the loose earth.

For sixty years Aunt Cannie Robb had guarded this treasure-house. As a plump young girl she'd helped to bury these valuables; now, as an old and shriveled woman, she became the high priestess of their resurrection. The pickax rose and fell; then its point struck wood.

"Dat's it! Dat's it." Her cracked voice came huskily, and Balfour's spade rasped along some planks that lay flat in the bottom of a shallow hole.

"Pull up dem bo'ds."

Beneath the heavy planking they found rough dirt steps leading to an oblong cavern, where a silver candelabrum stood like a sentinel at the entrance.

"Dat's jest de way I left it." Aunt Cannie nodded her satisfaction. "Dem candlesticks was de very last thing dat ol' Miss tol' me to put in. Now, den, honey, go down dere yo' own self."

Her mission was ended. Her task was done. Wrinkled black hands resigned the torch to young hands fresh and white.

THE glare of burning straw lighted Balfour downward, with Madison peering over his shoulder at heaps of Bohemian glass, silverware, boxes and trunks containing they knew not what, and portraits of long-dead Robbs, most dignified in gilded frames.

"Mr. Balfour," the practical lawyer suggested, "this will be all over town in an hour. We must move everything quickly."

"No, you wont; don't move a bottle," Saugsbee called to them as he dropped through the hole, flanked by the Creeper. "This stuff is confiscated."

Whipping a flash-lamp from his pocket, Saugsbee kicked among the empty cases—and failed to find a drop, either in the cellar, or in the cave below.

"What's become of all that liquor?" he questioned briefly.

"Huh!" Aunt Cannie chuckled. "Aint you seen dem devilish little boys wid it? Dey had it last."

"This must be the hole where Montagna hid his stock," said the disappointed Creeper, and Aunt Cannie laughed in his face.

"Sholy, Mr. Creeper; *dis is de very place.* I been knowin' dat for nigh on to five years, but constables can't never find nothin.' Co'se, taint no use tryin' to hide things from meddlesome boys."

Nevertheless Aunt Cannie didn't feel quite easy, for when Madison had got rid of the officers, she whispered to him:

"Mr. Harry, you better run home an' hide yourn. Dere would ha' been a heap mo' of it ef you hadn't scared Jake an' little 'Nias."

Would You Give 4½¢ a Pound To Lose 22 Pounds In 14 Days?

In the most pleasant way imaginable. No starving, exercise, massage, rolling, drugs or any discomfort whatever. Results in 48 hours.

E. A. KETTEL
Prominent New York Newspaper Man

Loses 28 Pounds in 30 Days

"For three years I have weighed 168 pounds. Then I heard of and sent for your method. That was my lucky day. I found your instructions easy and your menus delightful. I lost 28 pounds in 30 days — 8 pounds the very first week. My general health has greatly benefited, and I have not had one of my former sick headaches since losing my extra flesh."

(*Signed*) E. A. KETTEL,
225 W. 39th St., New York City.

MRS. GEORGE GUITERMAN

Loses 13 Pounds in 8 Days

"Hurrah! I have lost 13 pounds since last Monday. I feel better than I have for months."

(*Signed*)
MRS. GEORGE GUITERMAN,
420 East 66th St., New York City.

MISS KATHLEEN MULLANE
Stage Beauty and Famous Artist's Model

Loses 20 Pounds in 3 Weeks

"In just three weeks I have lost 20 pounds — just what I wanted to — through your wonderful new way to reduce. I think it is perfectly remarkable."

(*Signed*)
KATHLEEN MULLANE.

"YOUR method beats them all. I reduced from 175 pounds to 153 pounds (in two weeks) and I decided to stop at this weight. Before I started I was flabby and sick; had stomach trouble all the time. Was always sleepy. Had no vigor. If you had known me then and could see me now you would realize what a wonderful discovery you have made. I feel wonderful now. I keep on recommending this method to others who are as fat as I once was. I hope my statements will do some good to humanity."

(Signed) BEN NADDLE
102 Fulton Street,
New York City.

Complete Cost for All Only 97¢ Plus Few Cents Postage

300,000 formerly stout men and women have gladly paid $1.97, and more, for this remarkable method. Many write that their improved appearance and health was worth hundreds of dollars to them. Yet for a limited time you are being given the opportunity to purchase this wonderful method for only 97c.

Use the Coupon and Save a Dollar

Hundreds of others have had experiences just as pleasant as that of Mr. Naddle.

Mrs. Eugene Woodhull of 448 Lafayette Street, Utica, N. Y., says, "I lost 37 pounds, reduced my waist from 37 inches to 28 inches and feel better than I have for five years."

Mrs. Laura Tucker of 244 West 46th Street, New York City, wrote that she "lost 16 pounds in two weeks. Could have reduced even more rapidly but didn't wish to reduce too fast!"

Those who have taken off excess flesh through this new method have pronounced it the most pleasant way imaginable. They did not starve themselves. They took no drugs of any kind. They practiced no bitter self-denials, underwent no hardships, strenuous exercises, massages, hot baths or other discomforts. And they found that far from being harmful it actually brought a wonderful new health; with freedom from indigestion, constipation and many ailments of heart, liver and kidneys to which stout people are often subject. Mrs. Wm. E. Boyer of 9919 Ostend Ave., Cleveland, Ohio, was so delighted with this method that she wrote, "I will follow your method the balance of my life even when there is no need to reduce."

Look Years Younger Also

Those who reduce by this pleasant new method look much younger also. Stout people always look older than they really are and just to get rid of fat from face and figure would make them look somewhat younger. But the new method is so natural and so healthful that it brings a new sparkle to the eye, a new spring to the step, a new clearness to the complexion and new vigor and renewed powers of endurance which add still further to the appearance of youthfulness. Many have been astounded at banishing wrinkles which they had supposed to be ineffaceable.

A delighted Pennsylvania woman writes: "Since I lost those 54 pounds I *feel* 20 years younger and my family say I *look* it."

Mrs. Vida Speltz of 3943 Ruckle Street, Indianapolis, who reduced her bust from 40 inches to 36 inches and reduced proportionately throughout, writes: "Complexion and eyes are also much clearer. My husband says I look as if I were only 16."

Mrs. Eric Capon of Manhassett, Long Island, writes: "I lost 44 pounds. My friends wonder at my healthful and youthful appearance. It is grand to have a girlish figure again."

Miss Laura Morse of 271 West 119th Street, New York, lost 80 pounds and writes: "My friends hardly recognize me. I feel better than I have in years and I look 10 years younger."

Why You Lose a Pound a Day

Scientists have always realized that there was some natural law on which the whole system of weight control was based. But to discover this vital "law of food" had always baffled them. It remained for Eugene Christian, the world-famous food specialist, to discover the one safe, certain and easily followed method of attaining normal, healthful weight. He discovered that certain foods when eaten together *take off* weight instead of adding to it. Certain combinations *cause* fat, others *consume* fat. For instance, if you eat certain foods at the same meal they are converted into excess fat. But eat these same foods at different times and they will be converted into blood and muscle. Then the excess fat you already have is used up. There is nothing complicated and nothing hard to understand. It is simply a matter of learning how to combine your foods properly, and this is easily done.

This method even permits you to eat many delicious foods which you may be denying yourself. For you can arrange your meals so that these delicacies will no longer be fattening.

10 Days' Trial—Send No Money

Eugene Christian has incorporated his remarkable secret of weight reduction in an interesting little course called "Weight Control—the Basis of Health." To make it possible for every one to profit by his discovery, he offers to send the complete course on trial to any one sending in the coupon.

Why the Coupon Is Worth $1.00 to You Now

Those who use this rapid method of reducing to normal weight are usually so enthusiastic that they simply cannot refrain from mentioning this method to their friends. This will be the best kind of advertisement for us. Therefore, we are willing to lose money in order to secure a great number of users in the shortest possible time.

So here is our offer. Just mail the coupon without sending a penny. The coupon will be accepted as worth $1.00 on the purchase of this course, for which others have had to pay $1.97. Then when the course arrives all you have to do is to pay the postman only 97 cents plus the few cents postage, and the course is yours. There will be no further payments at any time. But if you are not thoroughly pleased after a 10-day test of this method you may return the course and your money will be refunded instantly. (If more convenient you may remit 97 cents with the coupon, but this is not necessary.)

Our liberal guarantee protects you. Either you experience in 10 days such a wonderful reduction in weight and such a wonderful gain in health that you wish to continue this simple, easy, delightful method or else you return the course and your money is refunded without question.

Don't delay. This special price may soon be withdrawn. If you act at once you gain a valuable secret of health, beauty and normal weight that will be of priceless value to you throughout your life. Mail the coupon NOW.

CORRECTIVE EATING SOCIETY
Dept. W-1206, 47 W. 16th Street, New York City

THIS COUPON IS WORTH $1.00 TO YOU

(Under conditions named below)

CORRECTIVE EATING SOCIETY
Dept. W-1206, 47 W. 16th Street, N. Y. City

Without money in advance, you may send me in plain wrapper, Eugene Christian's Course on "Weight Control —the Basis of Health." You are to accept this coupon as worth $1.00 (ONE DOLLAR) on my purchase of this course. Therefore, when the course arrives, I will pay the postman only 97 cents (plus the few cents postage) in full payment and there are to be no further payments at any time. Although I am benefiting by this special reduced price, I retain the privilege of returning this course within 10 days and having my 97 cents refunded if I am not delighted with results. I am to be the sole judge.

Name.....
(Please write plainly)

Street.....

City.....State.....

"An Extra Measure of Service"

Are You Banking With One Of The 7,450?

HOW many banks are there in the United States? Approximately 30,000.

How many of these banks deal directly with the Continental and Commercial Banks in handling out-of-town business for their customers?

Approximately 7,450, or *one-fourth of all the banks in the United States.*

If you are dealing with any one of our bank correspondents or 7,450 direct banking connections, you are receiving indirectly some of our financial service. Likewise our customers receive a part of the service of the 7,450 banks,—as much as each needs. This arrangement is a lawful "conspiracy" to facilitate business and perform a valuable public service.

The CONTINENTAL *and* COMMERCIAL BANKS

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Resources more than $500,000,000

THE WINGED

be a year of waiting before Buck would become a journeyman plumber and they could "take up home" together. And meanwhile a cloud gathered about his head.

THE city's purse had passed into the control of a reform administration, and the Francis X. McGonigle Association was now, to its sincere regret, come upon honest days. One by one the members, with hot resentment of the city's ingratitude, had relinquished their snaps. Jim, for instance, was no longer clerk to the Deputy Street-cleaning Commissioner of his ward; and the McGonigle himself had been compelled to "resign" from several fat nominal jobs and be contented with a mere alderman's salary.

Of course the members of the Association became restive. They had to live, they said. What was the use, they asked, of plugging for a guy—even a regular guy like Mack—when he couldn't do nothing for them? So, as a last resort, the McGonigle had sent out word of his only possible concession.

"Pull any stunts you like, but leave me out when you split the jack," the whisper reported him as saying. "You can count on me for bail and a word to the judge—that's all."

Premiums on loft-insurance in the Upper West Side became higher after that; and Monahan, the cynical old desk-sergeant of Precinct H, handed the Central Office a laugh by requisitioning two hundred printed forms to be headed *"Complaint of Larceny from the Person."*

Mary had known the trend of affairs, although there had been no direct statement of Buck's which she might later recall and say he told her this—or that. In his own way, by guarded hints, irrelevant observations which suddenly acquired meaning when he furnished a clue in a later sentence, and mere statements of cause and effect, he kept her informed.

"Pink Dempsey showed me a swell gold lavallière what he's going to give Birdie Sapinsky for Christmas," he would say, apropos of nothing. And Mary, knowing her cue, would wait patiently while Buck wrestled with the difficulty of unaccustomed indirection.

"I hear how Loefscheider is going to buy a new cash register. His old one was gone when he opened up yest'day morning," he would finish, addressing his words sadly to his shoes. (He never looked into her eyes during such revelations.)

After another meditative silence:

"Y'know, Mary, I'm a little sorry Mack's been such a good friend to me. I used to think it was a mighty fine thing for a lad like me to get in with the political push; but now—"

Breaking off, he would jerk his hands apart and thrust them into his pockets, flushing. And Mary would understand that confidences were over, for the time being.

IN the subway one morning, after wriggling into a position of least possible intimacy with the limbs and bodies of her

VICTORY *(Continued from page 93)*

fellow-passengers, Mary found room to unfurl one corner of her newspaper. She read, without surprise, that the McGonigle had been asked to appear before the Grand Jury and waive immunity, and that Mack, although stricken by a sudden serious illness, had replied that he would gladly do so when his doctor would permit him to undergo the physical strain of an appearance in court.

She knew that Buck had been preparing her for something like this, and that it would probably be some time before she saw him again. He had been Sergeant at Arms, guarding the secrecy of the McGonigles' executive sessions, hearing the scraps of argument, accusation and denial that filtered through the door. And the loyalty to Mack that had kept him in the Association against his will, after it had thrown off the political cloak and become openly a gang, would of course counsel him to leave town before he could be apprehended and grilled.

Mary thought that the room would be lonesome now, for Jim would drop out of Bella's life for a while too. She had heard things about Jim, and it was generally understood that he was pretty close to the McGonigle.

Mary knew, too, that she faced an ordeal in the store where she worked. No girl had ever exhibited her engagement ring more proudly than she, or discussed her fiancé more eagerly; and after the first flippant sneers at her announcement, no one else had received so many inquiries as to her "young man." Such was the measure of Mary's ugliness, who was so ill-favored as to be immune from the jealousy of the girls about her.

BUCK did not write, and of course Bella knew it. As the weeks went by and winter drew to its slushy close, Mary's smile became subdued, and she talked no more about her "steady." The whole Basement whispered cattishly for a while, and she heard fragments of the gossip. Then at last the gossipers found a new victim, and Mary could turn to Bella for a little sympathy. For Jim, who had gone to Cuba with the McGonigle (still under his doctor's orders), had stopped writing.

Mary and Bella made common cause for a while, until Bella discovered that Mary foolishly persisted in holding a last shred of faith in Buck beyond the reach of cankering doubt. At that, she abruptly severed the alliance, and they became again merely roommates. Then one fateful evening—

It had been a hard day for Mary, most of whose customers were fussy housewives, but apparently a harder one for Bella, who by virtue of her seductive lips and turquoise eyes presided at the cigar-counter.

When they reached home, a letter gleamed behind the pane of their box. Mary swooped upon it; then her heart became small and heavy after its sudden expansion at sight of the Cuban postmark. It was not from Buck, although Jim had once written that he had been in-

The importance of ONE SHORT WORD!

IN every home, there is a daily need for certain household products. Upon the purity and reliability of such products may depend the health of your family. Unless these are of the correct standards of purity, they may be more harmful than beneficial.

Your protection lies in remembering *one word* whenever you buy articles for your medicine cabinet. *That one word is* "SQUIBB."

The name Squibb identifies the products of a house which has served the medical profession for more than sixty years. In this service, E. R. Squibb & Sons have made many contributions to the advancement of chemical science as applied to medicine.

In most drug stores you will find Squibb Sections. These sections are devoted to Squibb Products, every one of which is made to conform to the highest professional standard.

For instance, you will notice that Squibb's Epsom Salt is more agreeable to take, due to its freedom from impurities.

Squibb's Olive Oil is a superior "virgin" oil from Southern France, unsurpassed in quality and flavor.

Squibb's Bicarbonate of Soda is pure. It is, therefore, without the ordinary bitter taste which is caused by impurities.

Look for the Squibb Section at your druggist's. Whether you buy household or toilet products, you guard the health of your family by remembering one word that assures safety and reliability—"SQUIBB."

SQUIBB

THE "PRICELESS INGREDIENT" OF EVERY PRODUCT
IS THE HONOR AND INTEGRITY OF ITS MAKER

General Offices:
80 Beekman Street, New York City

Laboratories:
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It set her thinking

SHE was exceedingly pretty—that lovely, winsome, fragile type that big, strong men are so susceptible to without knowing just why.

Yet she lacked some subtle something that might have gained her the larger popularity her charm and beauty seemed to deserve.

She, herself, was conscious of that shortcoming, too—whatever it was—but could never seem to define it.

One day in leafing through a magazine her eye was caught by an advertisement. First the picture, then the headline arrested her interest.

She started reading. It was on the subject of "halitosis" — the medical term meaning unpleasant breath. It told of how Listerine, the well-known antiseptic and surgical dressing, defeats halitosis by halting fermentation in the mouth and making the breath sweet, fresh and clean.

The uniquely frank yet delicate way in which this ordinarily avoided subject was brought to her attention impressed her. It made her think. And it did a great deal more for her.

It taught her a new phase of personal fastidiousness—one that she had never considered before.

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vited to join the McGonigle. She handed the letter to Bella and went on upstairs, where she eased her hurt in much attention to the business of preparing supper for two over a one-ring oil-stove.

So it happened that she failed to notice the glitter in Bella's eyes and the hardness of her mouth when they sat down at the table.

"What's the news from Jim?" she asked mechanically as she helped herself to the delicatessen spaghetti. "Whyn't he write before?"

Bella's answer was unintelligible. It might have been most anything, but Mary inferred that her chum's mouth was full of food.

"How is he?" she persisted.

"I don't care!" There was a razor edge on Bella's voice.

"Why, Belle!"

"No, I don't. I hope he's killed. He deserves to be—he's just the same sort of a hound as your Buck is."

"Bel-la!"

"Well, I didn't mean to pass the remark that way, but it's the truth!"

"But Buck and I are engaged!"

"So was Jim and I engaged," returned Bella. "You aint kidding yourself that being engaged once means anything *now*, are you?"

Mary did not answer. Bella rushed on, heedless of nothing but that it had eased her to stab her friend.

"Jim threw me down flat, so what chance have you got to hold a fella? Tell me that, if you're so sure of yourself, miss!"

Mary was simply dazed by this sudden attack. Bella, like a wounded snake, struck blindly again.

"Never got a word from 'im, did you? Not even a sooveneer postal. And there you sit, waitin' for 'im to come back and make you his blushin' bride!"

Her voice, thin and taut as wire, addressed the room itself:

"Huh! How do they git that way?"

THEN silence, while the hideous words etched themselves into both young souls. Bella recovered first from her preoccupation with pain, and it came to her with a sudden shock that Mary looked as if frozen.

"Oh, Mary, how did I ever—" she moaned.

The next instant she was smothering her sobs in Mary's skirt.

Mary looked down detachedly at the thin little shoulders that rose and fell in such childish agony, and tried to listen aloofly to the treble wail of naïve, easy grief. But when Bella's hot tears smarted upon her knees, she caught the mass of yellow curls to her bosom and crooned over them. Her pity melted in spite of herself, and yet she felt no better.

Long after Bella's sobbing had subsided, Mary asked gently:

"Just what did Jim say, dearie?"

Without looking up, Bella bit off her reply:

"He's gone and married one of them damned French vamps."

That seemed Life's final answer to Mary's quest of mated happiness. If Bella's lips and eyes, Pickford curls and cuddling ways, could not hold a man, surely there was no chance for her. She

was a fool, an idiot. The Sunday newspapers were right, after all: it was entirely a matter of propinquity.

She had a vision of Cuban women, simperingly immodest, ranging from cheaply complaisant to dynamically vicious, and her teeth grated.

Hours after they had gone to bed, her brain whirled on to bitterly logical conclusions. How had she ever been so insane as to think that handsome Buck McGee, with all the beauties of Havana to choose from, would ever return to carry the romance she had created with such artless art to the conclusion of marriage? To put her ashy hair and freckled face and narrow eyes opposite himself at the breakfast table!

This thought recalled her nascent dreams of marriage. Her cheeks burned, and she snapped out between hot lips:

"Beast!"

Bella stirred and threw back a blanket.

"I'll say so!" she murmured without vehemence.

So, long hours after Bella's pillow had dried and her elastic heart had transferred its pain to the girl's pride and vanity, Mary lay wide-eyed, burying her dead.

MARY, attending the party at Mae Grogan's father's bungalow, sat apart from the others, watching a rising moon that faded behind a curtain of evening mist.

It had been a sultry Sunday, and the crowd of young people, after the initial pairing off in the morning, had spent it lying about the warm sand, spasmodically splashing into the Atlantic with giggles and shouts, finding that the warmer the air, the colder was the water, and returning to drowse amorously upon the beach.

Mary caught herself thinking cynically that it would be a scandal if the "goings-on" were not justified by at least one engagement. This cynicism was deepened by her honestly ignored private envy of these good-looking young nymphs of the pavement and counter, and their desirability to the athletic, crudely sentimental boys, who hit off their endearments with hard jaws and embraced frankly, utterly self-unconscious.

By and by the others drifted away, and Mary was left alone, her unadmitted envy now tinged with self-pity, for she was stoical in the fashion of an undesired ugly woman, and without philosophy. She knew, of course, that she had been unhappy since Buck went away, but tonight she discovered the want and need of something else beside Buck's mere presence—and that something was what these other girls had.

A light mist blew in from the cooler water, carrying with it the salt tang, strangely and elusively sweet tonight. Across the narrow bay an orchestra played, and the syncopated dance-music drifted to her ears like the pulsing of blood in the temples, now heard, now gone. The mist was damp, warmly enervating, and Mary bared her throat to it and lifted her arms, letting the short sleeves fall back to her shoulders. After a while the fog lifted, leaving crêpe clouds between the sea and moon.

She yielded herself to the lassitude of

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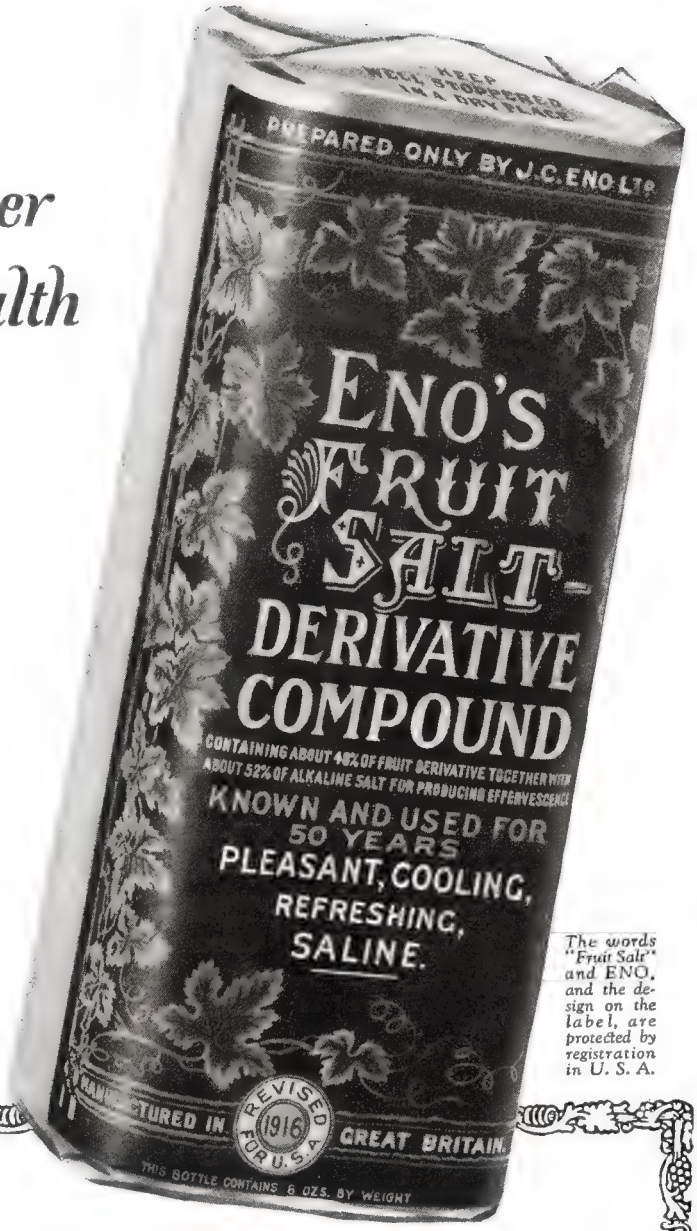
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perfect health on such a night, and relaxed in the hammock, watching the creamy surf and listening drowsily to the throbbing music from over the bay, faint as the echo of an echo.

"WELL—look here what I've found!" The voice was masculine, and came from directly behind her head.

Mary clapped a hand to the open V of her blouse. Close upon the heels of her modest embarrassment followed the realization that, lying in the hammock with her face obscured, she might have been mistaken for an unusually attractive blonde.

She took away her hand and sat up.

"Sure you found me!" Just as Bella might have said it! "But how do you know it's a case of—finders, keepers?"

The remark was perfectly in formula. First the parry, then the thrust. Always Mary had felt that, given the opportunity, she could flirt as well as the most adventurous of her circle, wherein the informal encounter was considered one of the most important branches of the fine art of attraction.

Tonight her mood and her opportunity were wedded, and the half-light of the mackerel sky afforded her face a perfect veil.

"If I made the laws for this here country," he was saying, "finders would be keepers every time."

"Would you, now?" asked Mary, honey upon her tongue. "Well, if I like you, perhaps I'll cast my woman's suffrage for that, next election."

He sat down and took her hand. She let him hold it the space of an encouraging moment, then withdrew it.

"Naughty, naughty!" he chided, and reaching around her back, he seized the same hand again.

"If nerve was money, you could pay the city debt out of your cigarette change."

He swung the hammock easily back and forth. After her first stiffening, she relaxed into his encircling arm. Then his grip softened upon her hand, and she laced her fingers into his. They stared, unseeing, over the purple ocean.

A giggle, with a hysterical catch at the end of it, ripped the velvet pall of night behind the nearest grass-topped dune. That would be Norma and Tony, Mary thought, and they might return at any moment.

"Let's go for a walk," she suggested, rising.

AFTER they had passed the last squat bungalow on the little sand street, he caught her close to him. She felt his hard fingers through her sheer blouse, and resolutely thrust the memory of Buck from her. They stumbled across the dry sand, perfectly out of step, for he held her too tightly. She stopped at a likely-looking seat of matted beach-grass.

He kissed her immediately, and her lips were ready.

In these affairs, so far as Mary knew, the first kiss is always simultaneous with the first opportunity. What followed had not been made so clear by the boasting of her confidantes. After it she supposed they would revert, for a time, to their former status of awkward boldness. She

would giggle; he would be "smart." Then a second kiss. After that perhaps more, interspersed with sighs and the humming or whistling of a sentimental tune. Sometime during the performance he should sit at her feet, and she would stroke his hair. Mary felt that she was going to like that part. Then they would walk back to a long parting outside the sleeping bungalow. Mary knew, because she intended to shut her eyes and imagine that he was the false Buck. Then she would give a fictitious address, agree cynically upon a faithless appointment, and her idyllic masquerade would be over. She felt vaguely that tears impended afterward.

BUT only a little while after she had lost count of kisses, Mary realized that her flirtation wasn't running according to schedule. Something imperative about the boy's caresses thrilled her; she tried to drop the barrier of reason before her bolting senses, but the affair was so perfect of its kind that it seemed cheating herself to stop so soon.

She decided that she had better start back right now.

The clouds parted, and the sudden moon played like a searchlight across her ashen hair and dull eyes, showing her freckles more blackly than the noonday sun. She saw his lips shape themselves into an O, and then astonishment relaxed her body abruptly.

"If it isn't the Winged Victory!" he had muttered.

He sneaked into an erect position, feeling mechanically for a cigarette.

With the same resiliency of fiber that a boxer acquires only after repeated blows, Mary rose to her feet too, and achieved an utterance that was distinct though lifeless.

"I'm afraid—I'll have to be getting back now."

As they plodded silently through the crunching sand, her brain writhed with hideous thoughts. Back of them was a self-contempt too profound to be formulated. Fed by the fierce fires of shame, it boiled up at last in a longing that the creamy sea would swirl up and engulf both the boy and her.

Yet there was no self-pity in this, for she was secretly glad that chance and darkness had given her an opportunity to play the game which is every woman's heritage. She was angry mostly because the weapon she had used ignorantly had turned upon herself.

Then she wondered what "they" would say if "they" heard. Mary, you see, was not clever enough to know that the purity of Bella and her peers was merely chemical, that she herself had been far cleaner and nobler than those others who played the game of attraction callously for the sake of flaunting masculine scalps and "good times."

She decided that she would have the laugh on him if he told; but she felt certain he wouldn't.

Then—preceded, it seemed, by a sudden hush—came the piercing blade of a scream. Mary heard it first with a feeling of gratitude for the diversion, and this turned to an uneasiness that almost at once became acute worry. As the eldest of the girls, she should not have let them stray off on such a night.

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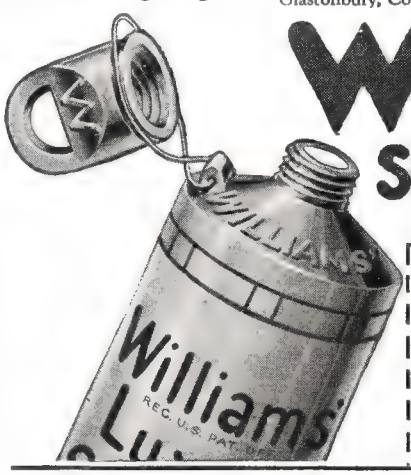

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She ran, resentful of the clogging sand, then picked up her skirts and rattled down the boardwalk, her forgotten companion loping at her side.

At the bungalow they found two of the boys sheepishly in the background, with Tony missing; and a group of three girls, two of them exclaiming now and then in agreement with a third whose voice grated stridently upon the soft night.

"After all the friend I've been to her, too,—treated her like a sister an' all,—she hadda right to—"

"What's the matter?" Mary gasped in excitement.

The door of the bungalow swung open before anyone could answer, and Norma slipped through, carrying her little imitation-leather bathing-suit bag in one hand and dabbing at her face with a handkerchief held in the other. She averted her eyes from the group as she passed, and then plodded heavily along the walk toward the trolley line.

"Norma—an' Tony—" began one of the girls breathlessly, but Mary interrupted with:

"She can't go home alone!"

With that she plunged after the little figure with the bag, now distant in the moonlight.

It never occurred to any of the party that Norma's dereliction might be covered by a conspiracy of silence. And to Mary, knowing them so well, the thought of suggesting it had been ridiculous. It is a pity that usage has worn away from her words their first force and meaning, for she thought of the inevitable damning scandal as "a terrible shame." It was not that one of the pack had stumbled and would be torn by the others, but a terrible shame that they were wolves who might be women.

A WEEK later—when Norma's parents had sent her away until the hue and cry of the pack would dull to a persistent echo—Mary unexpectedly received a letter.

When the girls came home that evening Mary stopped at the mail-box, and after a momentary hesitation Bella went on upstairs. She waited for her chum, turning over the pages of the evening paper resentfully, for she was hungry.

When Mary came at last, there were tears upon her freckled cheeks, smiles creasing her lips, and the suggestion of a dancing light in her watery eyes, altogether like an April morning upon a barren, sandy hillside.

"Belle!" she cried, running up. "Just look!"

Bella emptied the envelope, and read upon the stationery of a Buffalo hotel, in a strange, cramped, angular hand:

Dear Mary:

I know I been a bum not to write to you before now, but I thought you better be able to say I don't no if you was asked where I was, and besides I aint much good at writeing.

I'm a journeyman plumber now and makeing good money. I seen a lot of the country and I think its bigger than I thought. They aint so many people in the country as they is in the city.

Mary I'm comeing back to New York for a day or so. If you want to, meet me in front of the Casino at six next Friday.

Mary I thought a lot about you even if I aint wrote. I never met any ladies here that could dance like you dance.

Your loveing friend,
BUCK MCGEE.

P. S. I aint in politics out here.

Bella finished the letter and looked up without even attempting to force a smile for her friend.

"Your luck's turned, Mary," she said finally. "I think I'll go inside." And she hurried from the room, while Mary tried to see the supper utensils through the blindness of rapture.

SOMEHOW Mary managed to live through the days until Buck's return. She got breakfast and sold colanders, made change and wrapped parcels, as mechanically accurate as an automaton, while the invisible effulgence that bathed her spirit rose again and again to her lips in a whisper, like a prayer:

"My boy!"

At last came the time when she dressed, in a trance, feeling that her impending meeting was but another one of those dreams of Buck from which she had often awakened with a sense of unjust, intolerable pain. Now it seemed impossible that she should not awake soon to find the tarnished clock snarling on the pink pine dresser, gray day peering through the gray curtains, Bella breathing explosively through damp lips, and Buck as far away and unresponsive as ever.

Mary had begged off from the store at noon, and her plan had been to lunch and then dress leisurely, extracting from each golden moment of anticipation its full nectar. But when four o'clock came, a strange urgency settled down upon her.

She yielded to it and hastened, but it still remained, depressingly unsatisfied. And although she told herself that she was only flustered because the boat might dock ahead of time, the explanation did not seem reasonable.

Finally, with a gasp of relief, she clicked the imitation oak door behind her and swung down the street toward the car-line. It was along this street, upon this pavement, that she had walked home with Buck more than a year before, her woman's great adventure dawning. She smiled tenderly, and flashed a gay greeting to one of the girls of that bungalow party that was momentarily eclipsed from her happy memory.

With chin set and eyes that flicked over Mary coldly, appraisingly, the other held on her way.

Startled, Mary hesitated; then the weird imperative of haste descended again upon her. She quickened her steps, fleeing she knew not what.

Of course she was—she must be—running for the car.

AS she turned the last corner, she came fairly into Bella, and at first sight of her friend's face she stopped with a gasp. There had come to her an inkling, for behind the habitual demureness of Bella's pink-and-white face was a feline satisfaction.

"Was you on your way to meet Buck?" she drawled. "I wanted to catch you before you started."

"Why? Why? What's the matter, Belle?"

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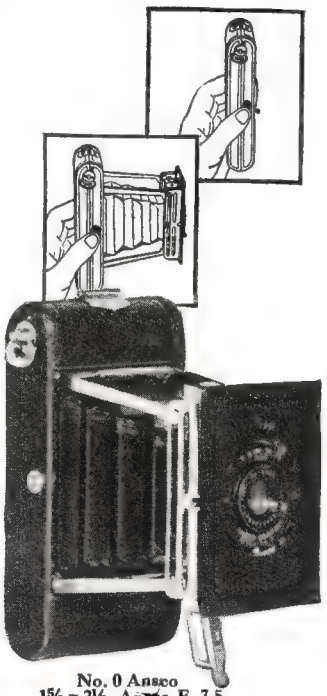

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Bella projected a hip, plastered her hand upon it, and drooped.

"I—I wouldn't go too fast with Buck just now if I was you, Mary. You know, it's all right to get a man—specially in a case like yours—but you don't want trouble afterward."

"Trouble? Why should I have any trouble? You're kidding—sure you're kidding me."

"Go ahead, then—you got a right to. But don't say I didn't warn you."

"'Bout what? What do you mean, now?"

BELLA uncomfortably stripped off a glove, then inspected the blue crescents upon the ends of her highly polished nails.

"Well—people are talking; that's all."

"They aint got no call to talk about me. You know it!"

"Dearie,"—gaining speed now that the ice was broken,—"that's just what I said myself the foist time I hoid it. That fella you met down to the beach started it. The boys got to kiddin' him about how he fell for you; an' he let on he wouldn't have walked you out if he hadn't had a good reason. Nobody took a swing at his mouth, an'—an' so it got round."

The perspective of pavement and tenement swayed and rose for Mary, but fell again as her freckled fist clenched.

"Huh—the dirty mouth of a fellow like that never hurt a good girl yet. He's sore because I put one over on him. That's it. He come round looking for somebody to spoon with, and I—I give him a lesson about getting fresh with every girl he meets."

Bella's resurrected envy had taught her how to drive in the dagger with the cruelest twist.

"You're right, Mary—what he says wouldn't matter—"

"Don't matter—"

"—wouldn't matter a bit, only before she went away, Norma told her folks that she'd never've had no trouble if it hadn't of been for your bad example that time down to the beach. And she's gone away now, and you know how women always believes things."

The intelligence flickered out of Mary's eyes; her mouth dropped open, and without seeing, she saw her hands twisting a handkerchief to shreds. Then she reached out as though to steady herself, but began anew the destruction of the handkerchief, for her strong, freckled hands were doing the writhing of her whole body and soul.

After an eternity she realized that Bella was still talking, in a maddening way that irritated her beyond belief:

"An' of course you understand it don't mean I aint your friend just the same, but you know a girl's got to have some regard an' make allowances for what's being said, and I'm always glad to see you just the same—"

"Why—what—"

"Oh, I didn't notice you wasn't listening. I just tried to explain how I fixed it up to go an' live with Gert Kaiser—I always wanted somepin like that little parlor she's got."

THAT was the stimulus Mary needed. Not that it drove from her the vision, seen now as from behind cold bars,

of Buck beside her in a woman's promised land. But it was like a cold shock upon her spine. She cleared her throat, and when she spoke, it was between taut lips:

"First, Bella, save yourself the trouble to move. I'm going. Second, I don't see how I can ever speak to you again."

She turned before Bella could reply, so her unworthy sister merely curled her upper lip and watched Mary walk down the darkening street. Not so dark yet, however, that she could not see her pause, pull a rectangle of white from her bosom, and toss it into the filth of the gutter.

It looked like a letter.

Mary passed on without a backward glance, for a heart adapts itself strangely to repeated breaking. When she came to her corner, she was herself again, patient, dull-eyed, made vaguely kind to her fellows by the dim feeling that this ache in her breast must be at least as universal as love and grief.

She turned into her own street, shied, and stood breathing hard through wide nostrils. There, under the stoop, next to Grober's saloon, something had stirred, tossed, and fallen back impotently. He must be hurt—men didn't get drunk upon the streets any more. She prowled cautiously up to the stoop, poised upon her toes, alertly tense. The man's position suggested, strangely, that some strong arm had thrown him there, and he had not stirred since. But she had seen him move.

She spoke, and he looked up at her as she stood bending over him, gasping at what she saw. He seemed to recognize her, although his eyes were but slits in the purple bruise of his face.

He drew back a clenched fist and struck feebly at her face, so slowly that she had time to start back. The dead weight of his hand fell upon her shoulder, and with a catch in her breath that muted her scream, she ran.

She found herself at her own door, snatched out her key, and flew up the stairs in a new panic caused by the blackness of the murky stairway.

BUCK took his cigarette from his mouth as she clicked the door shut, and it was not until she had lit the gas that the smell of his tobacco reached her and she turned to face him.

"Yes," she thought in a sudden clarity of perception, "I left the door open for Bella, so he *could* walk right in."

He seemed, oddly enough, to have never been away; he sat so naturally on the couch, his leanly solemn face sagging to the level of his massive shoulders, painfully and slowly thinking, so assured, so much at home, that Mary was not startled.

The panic that had flown with her up the dark stairs disappeared immediately at sight of him; her only trouble was that she didn't know what to say. Then she remembered how she had always waited his pleasure as to the first word, and she sat down beside him.

She was utterly happy, only rather tired and a little sleepy. But that didn't matter, for Buck was back.

He tossed his cigarette-stub neatly through the back window and spoke.

"I figured on catching you here before you started out to meet me," he said.

"Topkis costs One Dollar —but I'd pay twice that"

"TOPKIS certainly gives me my money's worth—and then some! I never got so much value for a dollar before. Dollar Topkis more than repays its cost every minute I'm wearing it.

"On top of perfect fit Dollar Topkis gives me better fabric and longer wear than lots of underwear that costs me double.

"It's good to know that when I buy Topkis size 38 I *get* full 38 measurement. I can't try on underwear in the shop, like a hat or shoes."

Men everywhere say Dollar Topkis is the biggest underwear value. Easy, roomy fit. Extra long, extra wide legs. Big armholes. Full cut chest and waist.

Best nainsook and other high-grade fabrics—pre-shrunk. Full size guaranteed.

No mistake, the Topkis Men's Athletic Union Suit is a big dollar's worth. No good dealer will ask more—but they know it's *worth* more and will say so.

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Free booklet tells what you ought to know about underwear. Write for it.

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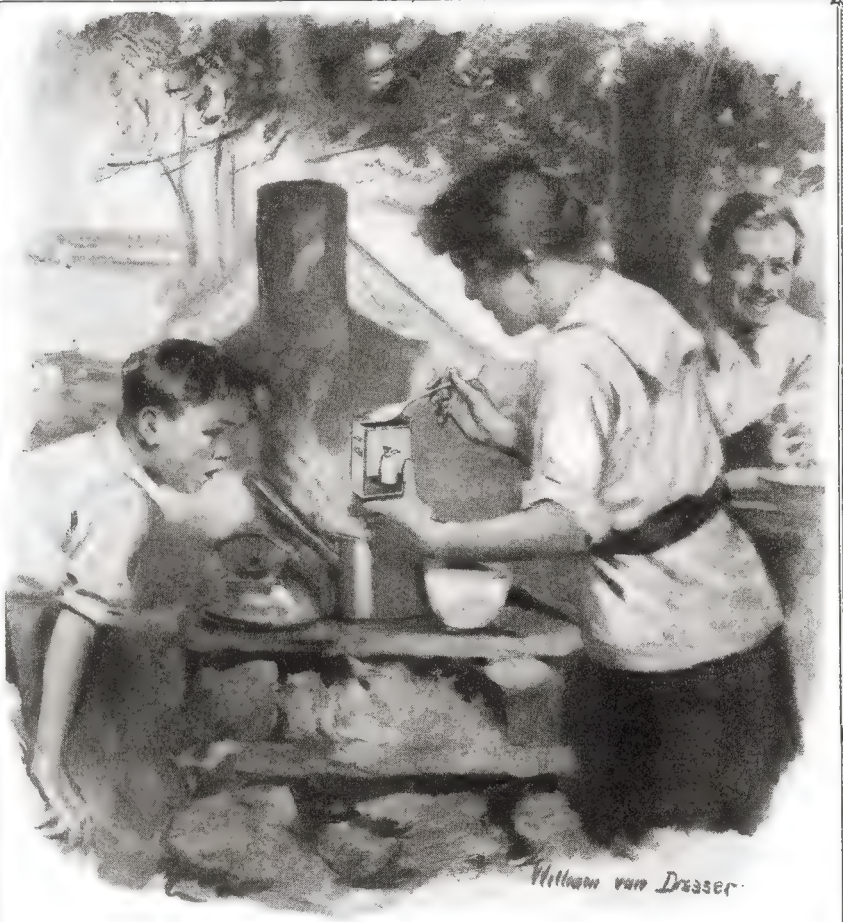

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BOOKLET OF CHOICE RECIPES SENT FREE

"That letter was just a blind. I knew Belle was sure to see it, and I wanted to fix things so I'd know just where the cops was lookin' for me while I was back in New York."

"That's all right, Buck." Of course she didn't mind.

"I been up to Buffalo," continued Buck, "near Canada. I see one of the crowd up there, and he said somepin about you, so I run down to ast you about it. Y'understand?"

A quick movement toward him drew Buck's attention to Mary's upturned face. He looked, and she opened her eyes receptively to his inquiring gaze, until he recoiled from their honest, watery depths. Then a crooked smile played across her face.

"I bumped into the party I was looking for," Buck added abruptly, "and he took it all back in front of the whole crowd in Grober's. See?"

Neither noticed that Buck had not asked the question which had brought him back from Buffalo. Mary had again evoked the old spell of perfect, wordless understanding.

"Buck," she gasped, "I—I saw him. Oh—"

He caught the pity in her voice, and answered, before her eyes could harden against him:

"I sent one of the gang in Grober's for a doctor. An' I can't help it if they let him lay—can I?"

The bell of an ambulance, like a distant alarm clock, answered him.

MARY was running her fingers through his hair when Bella opened the door, hesitated a moment, and then stepped into the room mincingly.

"Hello, Buck," she called, forcing a smile to turn upon him. "When d'you git in?"

"'S afternoon." He did not release Mary's hand.

"Lots o' things happened since you went, Buck. Better lemme give you a earful before you do anything."

Buck pulled Mary to her feet. She picked up her hat and tucked the ashy strands under it.

"I wish you was a fella; that's all I got to say," observed Buck to Bella.

With that he led Mary out and down the stairs. She was so serenely content that, at the second landing, she made a mental note of the way he had put on his derby as soon as he had slammed the door behind him. And that cigarette, through the window. Bad habits. She would have to train him.

THUS exits the Winged Victory. Already she had lost the gift she shared with the Samothracian, the suggestion of indomitably pressing forward toward an unattainable goal. When she made her responses to the Alderman, she was no more than a freckle-faced, ashen-haired Juno, complacently satisfied.

She had earned release from the burden of her tragic beauty. Despite the clamor of her instincts and the slavering jaws of her fellows, she had achieved charitable understandings and fine dignities—proved her body as incorruptible as the marble Nike, and her soul as unconquerable as the eternal spirit of womanhood.

FIRES OF AMBITION

(Continued from page 75)

the box above, seemed to have gained a new significance to Fanny. "Too big a man to fetch and carry for Mary Ryan." He was. Fanny felt resentful toward any girl who had demanded this of him. She couldn't think of her friend Joe Bass as fetching and carrying for any woman. But it was not until the *entre-acte* after the third curtain that she renewed the topic in her mind—driven to it by sheer curiosity. And as Martin made some comment on Mr. Somerville, the fourth in the Savage box, she said:

"Martin, I think perhaps you're unjust to Miss Ryan. She's very ambitious and very busy. They say she has the entire management of the shop now. It's not surprising that she finds it difficult to see Joe as often as she used to."

"She doesn't find it difficult to spare the time for Mrs. Savage's opera box."

"You're intolerant, Martin. And Joe hasn't much time for any social engagements now."

"He'd go running to her, if she phoned him."

"Oh!" And then the subject uppermost in her mind, approached for Martin's benefit with an air of amusement slightly careless: "How strange for an owl like Joe to be in love with a humming bird like Mary."

"Love? I wonder," said Martin. "She's a habit. Always has been. He's always fetched and carried for her—since they grew up together down on the East Side. Maybe he does love her. I don't know. He acts that way sometimes. But it makes me mad to think of a man like Joe—" He broke off indignantly. "Just because she's got a pretty face."

"No," said Fanny, while she watched the Savage box. "She's something more than pretty—clever, magnetic—"

"H'm!" said Martin dryly.

THERE was a commotion in the Savage box. Mr. Savage and Mary Ryan rose, the girl turning her head over her shoulder with a smile and a word for her companion. They were out for a promenade in the foyer, to see and be seen. This, as Martin knew, was Mary's gesture of defiance to her detractors.

But among the low-voiced conversations about them, Martin and Fanny heard the raucous tones of an old lady, Mrs. Robinson-Merrick, who sat behind them, saying: "It's the little milliner Bart Savage is so attentive to—met her at Ruth Vanderhorst's — Miss — Miss O'Brien."

And then a comment from a younger woman: "I wonder what she uses on her hair—henna wash, probably."

After this, Fanny took warning, saying no more. Martin already was—and she on the verge of being—as unkind as they. But what Martin had said of Joe had made Fanny contemplative. And that night at home she sat for a long while before her mirror, after brushing her hair—and then realized with a shock that she had given at least a half-hour of thinking to her friend Joe Bass.

Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen

"..and here's your Waterman"

SHE has hers, of course. But she's making sure that scratchy pens and gummy ink-wells will play no part in their vacation this summer and that their necessary correspondence will all be done out of doors in the open.

There is a size in

Waterman's (Ideal) Fountain Pen

that fits your hand exactly, and a style of point that was *shaped and tempered* to fit perfectly your individual character of handwriting.

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Waterman's Ideal Ink—Best For Fountain Pens and General Use—Writes Blue—Dries Black

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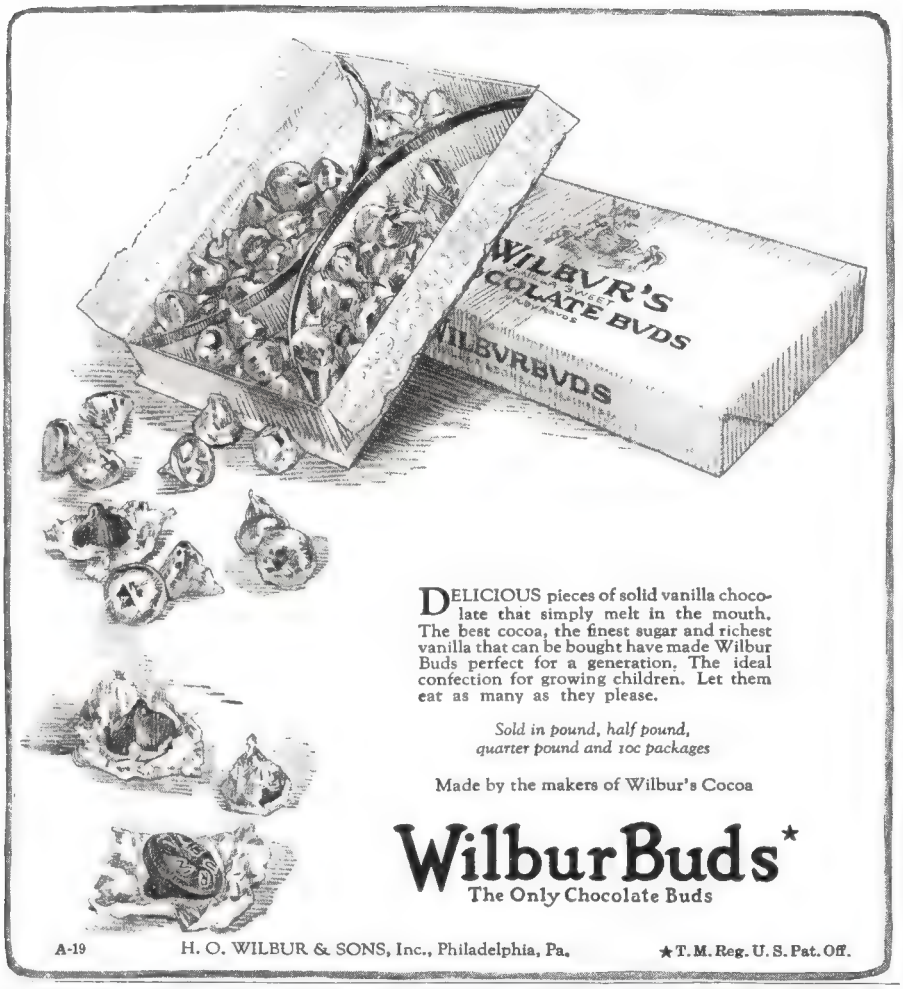

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Chapter Nineteen

MARY'S last triumph over Bart Savage, which had so satisfied her egotism, should have been a warning to her. But meshed in her dreams of social conquest, and confident of her own ability to take care of herself, she took his acquiescence in her wishes as an acknowledgement of the necessities of a proper conventionality and a further tribute both to her virtue and her wisdom. The dinner at the Savages' before the opera had been a stodgy affair. The house, as she entered it, gave her an impression of majestic gloom, which closed in upon her like a blanket. Heavy hangings, massive dark furniture, pale gray carpets of Aubusson with large designs of scrolls and roses, soundless as though one were walking in snow, lights subdued by heavy silken shades, an antique of a butler in solemn black with the emotionless face of a croupier, family portraits by Stuart and Sully, later ones by Carolus Duran and lesser Frenchmen.

The familiar sound of Bart Savage's voice as he entered from the adjoining library awoke her to pleasant consciousness as though from a bad dream. And Mrs. Savage, who came in from another room with Mr. Somerville almost at once, bending from the glacial heights of her reserve, gave every impression of doing what she could to make the best of a hospitality not of her choosing. But she spoke kindly, using the exact phrases of formality, and Dick Somerville's quiet greeting quickly set Mary at her ease. Mary's intuition, formed at an earlier meeting, gained assurance that Bart Savage's home was merely the dwelling where he housed the dignity of his name and family connections, associated in nothing with the real life that he lived out in the world. For here, she realized, an effete and dispensable era had one of its last strongholds, in which Lillian Savage was supreme. This house was not in Bart's taste, she knew, for the country place, which he had planned and built, was more to his liking.

And yet at table he too seemed to partake of some of the massive dignity of his surroundings, developing the conversation with his usual air of command along a line of shallow commonplaces, and avoiding deeps which might have led to misunderstandings. From the first Mary had attempted to carry out her plan of winning Mrs. Savage, and though she entered upon the attack by throwing skirmishers forward in the open order of casual remarks on various subjects, she found it extremely difficult to draw her definite fire. She had a way of raising her brows and saying "Oh, really!"—a phrase which did duty in varying tones for every note in the small gamut of her emotions.

MARY wondered whether Mrs. Savage was under duress, or just stupid. But she decided at first that her hostess was neither, but just ill at ease with people she hadn't met in at least a dozen houses of patrician familiars—perhaps, too, a little bored at the prospect of an opera which she had already heard a dozen times. And then a little later, when Bart spoke quite frankly of some trifling and

amusing incident that had happened in Paris, Mary noted the scarcely perceptible lowering of her chin, the raising of her thinly penciled eyebrow, the "Oh, really!" of polite inquiry, and then the very slight dilation of her arching nostrils, suggesting a deer scenting the wind in search of a danger. As though she had realized that something was required of her, after this, she smiled gently upon them both, and joined, with her air of delicate pedantry, in the general talk that followed.

At the opera her manner had thawed, and Mary had grown more hopeful of gaining her approval, until she realized that the cause of Mrs. Savage's sudden graciousness was to be found in her desire to make the proper appearance before the leveled opera-glasses of her acquaintances in the Diamond Horseshoe. She was going to be difficult—extremely; for the formulæ which had been so successful with Mrs. Vanderhorst and the easy-going crowd at Eloïse Gordon-Knight's would not be effective here. Mrs. Savage's delicacy was an impeachment of Mary's health, her mincing correctness a constant reproach to Mary's spontaneity. Mary had a sense of chasing a moth with a sledge-hammer.

A WEEK later, when Mary called in the late afternoon, she caught Mrs. Savage having a cup of tea while she waited in the shrouded drawing-room for the children. She glacially offered Mary tea and then began a brief catechism of her visitor, whom she studied with pale gray eyes. Mary was quite frank in the narrative of her life, from which she omitted nothing essential, wondering all the while why a woman of Mrs. Savage's coloring insisted upon wearing the pastel shades of brown and gray which washed her out so much more than necessary.

In the midst of this conversation the children, mildly flushed from their walk in the Park, entered with their governess. Lillian, aged ten, was *blonde cendrée* like her mother, but with her father's eyes; Ruth, aged six, was sallow, with brown hair and dark eyes. They curtsied prettily, and then the mother gave them cambric tea. They were a little bashful at first, but Mary was fond of children, reflecting her liking in her manner, and so Lillian, at Mary's gesture of invitation, came and sat beside her on the sofa, regarding her aslant with appraising eyes.

Then in a pause in the talk the child spoke with a refreshing candor.

"I like red hair. I wish my hair was red like yours."

"Lillian!" said the mother. "How dreadfully rude of you, darling! Haven't I told you not to make personal remarks?"

"I *do* like it," insisted the child.

"I'm so glad," said Mary, putting an arm around her. "And I think you are adorable."

To which Ruth sidled around the table within reach of Mary's arm, gurgling softly: "Aren't I adorable too, please?"

So Mary hugged them both, ignoring Lillian Savage's mild protests. Here at least she had found no difficulty in gaining friends. The severe-looking governess stood waiting, but they still clung while Mary told them about a puppet-show that

Ask Any Beauty

How she beautifies her teeth

If all women knew what millions know, they would all brush teeth in this new way.

Ask anyone with glistening teeth. You see them everywhere today. You will probably learn that the reason lies in this new-day method.

Then you can see the results on your own teeth if you make this delightful test.

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The natural tooth luster is clouded by film. At first the film is viscous. You can feel it now. It clings to teeth, gets between the teeth and stays.

Food stains, etc., discolor it. If not removed, it forms dingy coats. Tartar is based on film. And few things do more to mar beauty.

Film also holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth to cause decay. Germs breed by millions in it. They, with tartar, are the chief cause of pyorrhea. Thus most tooth troubles are now traced to film.

Very few escaped

Tooth troubles were constantly increasing. Beautiful teeth were seen less often than now. So dental science saw the need for better cleansing methods.

Research found two ways to fight film. One acts to curdle film, one to remove it, and without any harmful scouring.

Avoid Harmful Grit

Pepsodent curdles the film and removes it without harmful scouring. Its polishing agent is far softer than enamel. Never use a film combatant which contains harsh grit.

Able authorities proved these methods effective. Then a new-type tooth paste was created, based on new discoveries. These two great film combatants were embodied in it.

The name of that tooth paste is Pepsodent. Careful people of some fifty nations now use it, largely by dental advice.

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Pepsodent also corrects mistakes made in tooth pastes of the past. It multiplies the alkalinity of the saliva. That is there to neutralize mouth acids, the cause of tooth decay.

It multiplies the starch digestant in the saliva. That is there to digest starch deposits which may otherwise ferment and form acids.

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Last Call for Camp!

Summer is here again, and with it vacation time. What is your child's summer to be?

You will find one of the well conducted summer camps listed on page 7 an ideal solution. Here he will learn to swim—sail a boat—ride a horse—know the trees and flowers—recognize the call of the birds and best of all, enjoy the companionship of children his own age. Give him the chance to grow strong and sturdy in the crystal clear air of the mountains or the salt tang of the shore. Let him store up health and energy for the school year ahead.

Decide *immediately*. The camp season begins during the last days of June and there are only a few places remaining open for eager campers.

Our comprehensive camp information service is at your disposal without charge. State location desired, whether for boy or girl and any special requirements, enclose a stamped return envelop and address:

The Camp Department

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE
33 West 42nd Street New York City

she had seen on the Champs Elysées. These children were starved with formality, denaturalized with the punctilio of the forbidding governess, who presently dragged them off to the nursery.

The following week Mary brought to the Savage girls two wonderful dolls dressed by Miss Benner herself in copies of the latest model ball-dresses. The children were delighted and gave expression to their joy in renewed manifestations of their affection for this new delectable kind of visitor.

If she had only had the affections of the children to consider, Mary would have already justified her friendship with their father; but Lillian Savage, having once acquiesced in the wishes of her husband, refused further to unbend. Perhaps she couldn't. Perhaps Mary's vitality oppressed her, or perhaps she was even a little jealous of the ease with which the visitor had captured the friendship of her children as well as her husband. When the girls had been sent to the nursery, the conversation of the two women languished. Lillian Savage's thin fingers were now employed in a desultory idleness of fancy-work.

"It is very good of you," she said in the pause, "to bring those lovely dolls to the children. It must have been a great trouble to have dressed them so accurately in the latest French models."

"It has been a delight," Mary replied genuinely. "Miss Benner was really enthusiastic—for the first time in months."

"Who is Miss Benner?"

"The head of our workrooms."

"Oh, really!" The thin fingers stopped moving and rested for a moment in Mrs. Savage's lap. And then, "You know, Miss Ryan," she went on coolly, "that I find it very necessary to keep the minds of my daughters as far as possible removed from the — ah — influence of modern dress."

"But dolls, Mrs. Savage!"

"It is a small thing, perhaps, but even the least things have their influence upon the malleable imaginations of children."

"Oh! I'm so sorry. I thought—"

"I was going to say," her hostess continued as the fingers took up their idling again, "that I would be—ah—very much better pleased, if you'd let me—pay for them."

Mary started upright with a pained expression. "Oh, Mrs. Savage! How could you think? Of course that's impossible. It's such a small return for,"—she paused a moment uncertainly,—"for all your kindness and hospitality."

AT Mary's pause Mrs. Savage's small mouth compressed so that it was not more expressive than a buttonhole.

"Neither Mr. Savage nor I," she said with thin precision, "ever like to feel that our—ah—hospitality is given with any expectation of immediate compensation."

Little fires of intuition shot from Mary's glance. She could not believe at first that she had heard correctly, but the set lips and the careful preoccupation of Mrs. Savage's manner were too convincing to be ignored. The woman was cold as death, suspicious, deeply antagonistic, and had always been. Mary had often wondered what kind of thoughts germinated behind those thin-veined temples.

She knew now. The woman seethed with introspection.

Mary rose. "I did not offer my small gifts as compensation for anything, Mrs. Savage," she said with difficulty, "but from a real desire to give just a little —pleasure. I'm sorry to have been misunderstood."

"*Must* you go?" Mrs. Savage had risen too, and they faced each other, Mary controlling her resentment with difficulty, Lillian Savage erect, frigid, the skin drawn tightly over her bones as though what flesh she wore had been drawn inward. "Good-by," said Mary with dignity. Neither made a movement of hands, and Mary turned into the hall, where the croupier came hurrying as though in a sincere effort to expedite her departure.

SHE went down the steps of the house, a blur of crimson on each cheek, and across the Avenue, into the Park, where she chose the nearest path, walking furiously. The insult had been gratuitous —quite beyond the bounds of decency— and conveyed in euphemisms from the lips of a woman so conservative, the more deadly in its intention. Aside from the violation of her feelings, the most definite emotion that emerged from the welter of Mary's impressions was that of fury at the failure of her advances. It seemed as though the frail social craft which she had been guiding with such care had crashed in a fog of illusion against a buttress of the rocky jetty which protected the haven of her ultimate hopes.

Mary knew that the small group of her friends were in the habit of poking fun at the stodginess of the inner circle with which Mrs. Savage was so closely affiliated, old and wealthy New York families who lived their social lives conservatively and refused to give countenance to the encroaching extravagances of the age; and though this small group which had accepted Mary was extravagant in most senses of the word, it met this inner circle at many tangents and even followed its arcs for calculable distances. People like the Pardees and the Gordon-Knights therefore could afford to be amused. Mary couldn't. Nor could she afford to be humiliated by the wife of Bart Savage. But the signs were plain. Mrs. Savage, after considering the situation from all angles, had decided to have none of her. At the present moment Mary hated her cordially, as much for what she was as for what she had done—a nicely balanced mixture of envy and malice.

Her cheeks were still burning when she reached Fifty-ninth Street. Silly fool! Silly fool and ingrate—when Mary had tried so hard to be friendly—when Mary had befriended her again and again in ways of which she could not know—by reminding Bart of the duty that he owed. And this woman who flouted her was the one he owed it to. Silly fool! She would better have made a friend of Mary than an enemy! Well, Lillian Savage had chosen. Mary washed her hands of her. If Bart wanted her friendship within the limits she had prescribed, he should have it.

As she reached the street in which she lived, she shrugged away the thought of the unpleasant afternoon. That mauso-

Posed by Lois Wilson, attractive Paramount motion picture star. Miss Wilson is one of many charming women of the screen who use and endorse Ingram's Milkweed Cream for promoting beauty of complexion. From a photograph by Donald Biddle Keys.

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Deliciously flavored
BEEMAN'S
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leum and the living-dead woman who occupied it—Bart's wife. Poor Bart! Mary was a little sorry for Bart.

Chapter Twenty

JOE worked hard. His period of probation passed successfully. He was taken into conference by the members of the firm on some of the more important cases in the office. For these, with an ingenuity which showed that he had really found his vocation, he succeeded in procuring highly desirable evidence. In the year that had passed since it was turned over to him, the case of Thomas Horner *vs.* Estate of James Taylor had never come into the courts, and there was every indication that Horner's lawyers had advised their client against further proceedings.

His personal relations with his client were of the pleasantest. Mrs. Despard having apparently forgotten the moment in which they had been so near a misunderstanding. She called him up several times during that winter and the next, asking him to luncheon, to dinner, accepting his excuses with regret, now aware that Joe's law-practice was the greatest thing in the world to him.

Then she sent for him professionally.

He went to the Fifth Avenue house and took lunch with her. It was of course the old story of her unhappy marriage, now told with a practical air, in which the sentimental note was absent. Joe was grateful for the omission, and quite in his best legal manner, which was beginning to sit well upon him, listened and advised. She had no case against her husband, of course, except the trivial excuse of incompatibility, for one could hardly introduce a stamp-collection as a co-respondent. A separation could be managed without difficulty, but he cautioned her to consider the matter carefully before resorting to the rather disreputable pretexts which under such circumstances were commonly employed in a suit for divorce. She then deferred her decision while Joe promised to look into all the legal phases of the case.

Then, their conference ended, Gertrude Despard took pains to show him again the cordiality of a warm friendship. She had been and still promised to continue a valuable personal client whom he couldn't afford to relinquish. And so he accepted her invitations and her patronage, for she seemed quite possessed of the idea that he should "go out into society" and "meet people" who would be helpful to him in his career.

Few men can resist the friendship of a woman who has been and continues to be kind. Joe was fully aware of Mrs. Despard's deficiencies, but he and Gertrude seemed to have reached a perfect understanding, and the confidence and attentions of this handsome woman flattered his pride, already rather bruised by Mary. And so, though he was no squire of dames, he went where she took him.

It was at the Gordon-Knights' town-house at a late supper-party after the theater that for the first time in more than a year since their quarrel about Mr. Savage, Joe saw Mary.

The Gordon-Knights were members of the "hunting set," an abstract term for those who were interested in the sportive achievements of the horse, under their fatuous direction. It was in this crowd, since her unfortunate venture at Mrs. Savage's, that Mary now found her greatest advantages. Most of her acquaintances were already affiliated with it: Bart Savage (in the season), the Knights, Ruth Vanderhorst (when she was bored with her painting), Bertha Pardee, Reggie Cheever, Augusta Ames, Mrs. Lascelles and a miscellany of gay younger men of whom Dicky Somerville was a bright example.

Mary's quick glance caught Joe and his companion as they entered the room, and Joe's roving eye met Mary's at the same time. They were well met, for Bart Savage was Mary's escort, and Joe was Gertrude Despard's.

Joe Bass had resolved never to seek Mary again, but she saved him the trouble by crossing the room immediately and speaking with a fine note of friendliness, as though a year had not passed in which she could have seen him.

"How do, Mrs. Despard? So glad. Why, Joe! How *are* you? You're looking awfully well. What a fraud you are! You don't look as though you'd ever done a stroke of work in your life. Does he, Mrs. Despard? Why haven't you been to see me, Joe?"

The reply was obvious, but Joe was becoming accustomed to the little insincerities of Mary's kind of people.

"Oh, busy," he muttered.

"I don't believe it," she said.

"I am. Mrs. Despard drags me out of my shell once in a while."

To Joe, this was a plain statement of an obvious fact. To Mary, it seemed like a challenge and a reproach. But this was not the moment for her reply.

"I hear you're getting to be *such* a famous person," she said. And then to Mrs. Despard: "Didn't he make a lot of money for you? Or save a lot, or something?"

"Oh, yes," Miss Ryan. He is getting the reputation of being quite the ablest young lawyer at the bar."

EACH spoke with the acidulous ease which attempts commonplaces in lieu of fingernails. And so in a new antipathy the old one was forgotten. The sight of Joe in the train of Mrs. Despard had startled Mary a little, and she had chosen the easiest way to conceal her discomfiture.

As the evening lengthened it astonished her too that she had never really thought of Joe as a possibility in such company. All her life she had been too close to him. He was like a familiar piece of furniture in a room which one has used for comfort and convenience, rather than appearance. But tonight she was obliged to admit that without being handsome, he gave the impression of being easily the most definite

John Galsworthy
the most eminent of English authors, has written for The Red Book Magazine one of his most noteworthy stories—"Acme." Don't fail to read it in our forthcoming July issue.

personality in the room. High praise in a company which contained Bart Savage and Worthington Ames, the young Senator from Massachusetts. Bart Savage had bulk, power and the animalism which balks at nothing physical. Senator Ames was slender, wiry and alert. Joe seemed to repeat the finer ingredients of each—power without bulk, sinew without thinness. And he had something subjective that neither possessed, a stillness of person denoting strength in repose, a strength without effort.

It was here for the second time that Joe met Mr. Savage. There was a mutual recognition of qualities which had no place in this communion—the freemasonry of men who do their work in the world. They drank together and smoked. Savage had heard something of Joe's career from Mary, and showed an interest which, begun on Mary's account, ended on Joe's. Joe felt that he would have liked the man a great deal better if he hadn't been Barton Savage. For he couldn't forget the anomaly of his friendship for Mary, condoned by these careless people who considered it from the angle of their own indulgences.

Mary was untainted. Joe would have sworn to that. But expediency was Mary's fetich. And what of the moment when expediency clashed with ethics? He was sure now that Mary had already lost something of her finer fiber. She was too much at her ease in this hard-smoking, hard-drinking company.

ON the way to Joe's apartment, whither Mrs. Despard took him in her car, new poisons were distilled. His companion was too clever to flaunt her prejudices baldly. But she knew the uses of insinuation, the laugh ill-timed, the invective wrapped in blandishment.

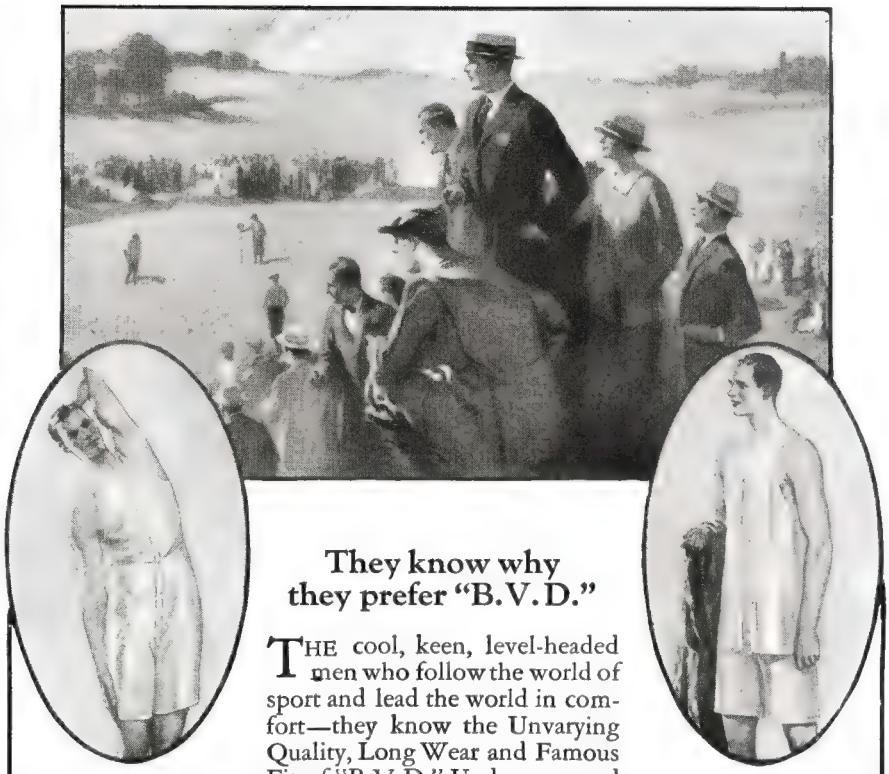
"How extraordinary Miss Ryan's beauty is!" she said. "More mature, don't you think? And she's so clever. I didn't use to like her at first. I thought her—er—just a little forward. But my doubts are all turned to admiration. Any young girl who can win the absorbed attention of a mind like Bart Savage's and hold it for a year and a half, must have brains."

He made no reply. None seemed required.

"You know Bart never had an 'affair' before in his life. At least, I've never heard of one, and anything that isn't gossiped about in our crowd isn't worth gossiping about. Bart is really fine—one of our strong men. Nobody ever supposed he had a thought outside of business until Mary Ryan came along."

"He'd better have minded his business," observed Joe.

"Yes, it would have been better. I suppose it's just in the nature of things that married people get bored with each other. I hadn't been married a year when I knew exactly what Phil would say or do at any hour in the day—every gesture, every intonation, every little trick of manner—until I was ready to scream with nerves. Just a little thing like the way he had of sniffing through his nose when he laughed—I've been very near murder for that. Oh, you don't know anything about the horrible persistence of an antipathy. . . . . Poor



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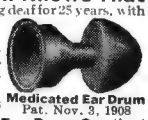

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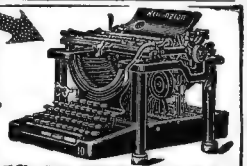

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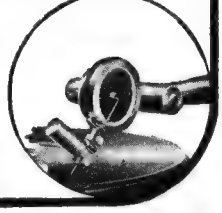

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Bart! Lillian is *so* early Victorian, so delicate. I'm sure the noiseless way she has of moving about from one chair to another must get frightfully on his nerves. And then she's not very colorful or very clever. Miss Ryan is both. She's a girl that any man might fall in love with. Don't you think so, Mr. Bass?"

"Yes."

"Of course, she's a very old friend of yours. A man who has grown up with a girl as you have with her, misses the little things that appear to the eye and mind of the casual acquaintance. There's something about Mary Ryan—er—I don't know—an appeal to the masculine— Not sex altogether—that isn't what I mean. I think it's more subtle than that—rather an appeal through indifference and independence. But the appeal is there. I've heard it called sex-antagonism."

She took his silence for interest and went on:

"I never knew what the words meant before. I think I do now. The desire to conquer or be conquered. It's primitive like an instinct, insistent like an ugly dream. But unlike the dream it's real, and one doesn't wake up. Do you know what I mean?"

"No, I'm afraid I don't."

"That's because you're not sensitive to the feminine complex."

"It's lucky I'm not."

"I wonder," she said slowly. "You miss a great deal that is interesting, Mr. Bass."

"And dangerous," he added.

She was silent a moment, and then: "I'm beginning to understand why Miss Ryan's complexities have escaped you. Bart Savage is cleverer than you. He sees the real Mary Ryan that you don't—the woman beneath the pretty shell, who is not so indifferent and is just as dependent on the love of a man as every other woman is."

"What do you mean?"

"Merely that she's human. So is Bart."

He was silent for a moment. But her meaning was obvious.

"I don't think she's that sort of a fool."

Gertrude Despard laughed cynically. "A woman never knows what sort of fool she can be," she said, "until she becomes one. Surely you can't believe after all this time that she doesn't give him encouragement?"

This parting shaft struck deep and rankled all the night. This was the sort of thing that people were saying of Mary! He would have liked to go to Mary again—to plead with her. . . . . To what end? New quarrels, new misunderstandings, further alienation! Impossible. The past year had done something strange to Mary. She had outgrown him.

Chapter Twenty-one

TO do Mary Ryan justice, it should be recorded that she was ignorant of the malice in the gossip about her. With the exception of Ruth Vanderhorst, who had spoken with some seriousness a long while ago, none of Mary's other acquaintances of the gay set seemed to take Bart Savage with any seriousness. But her awakening to the reality of the situation was to come, and with a startling suddenness. For some months she had had difficulties in regulating the attentions of Bart Savage to conform with her notions of his privileges. After their return from Europe they had met, almost by chance, at other people's houses, or at lunch in public places, at the most once or twice a week. It was at this time that Lillian Savage had declared war. Bart was always excellent company, and her limitations understood, had given Mary every sign of circumspection. But recently his manner had changed. One evening when she had flirted with Reggie Cheever, who had long been hanging reproachfully in Mary's background, Bart Savage grew angry. It was a way he had. She attempted, amiably, to inform him that he had no authority over her actions, and he grew angrier still. This quarrel should have warned her of the pitfalls toward which she was headed. But she merely found the situation a source of amusement.

She made the mistake of many women in weighing the danger of a situation in the scale of her own emotions. She minimized the damage that she did, because she suffered none herself. The thought of Bart Savage as a lover was repugnant to her for many reasons, the most practical of which was that she liked him much better as a friend. The other reasons went deeper and were more convincing. If he attracted her mentally, physically he repulsed her. Even the touch of his hand had a sort of assertiveness which she disliked. To Mary he seemed an animal of the highest type, but with a mind so slightly tinged with the spiritual that his instincts, though under excellent control, were more essential than his reasoning powers. He ate a great deal of meat, and was fond of good things, drank as he pleased, for wine, cocktails or whisky never seemed to affect him. But these deficiencies—from Mary's point of view—were compensated by his wit, his acquaintance with the world and his "inside" information as to all of the great movements in financial, industrial and political life. As long as he talked of these things, he held her by the sheer force of his intellect, flattering her by the frankness of his confidences.

But in other moods Savage was less satisfactory, and as the months passed, she had found him growing less tolerant of her reservations, demanding as his right, both her society and her affection. As a result, though she had begun by believing that she was merely the creature of his idle hour and that therefore he was legitimate game for her coquetries, it was more evident that he was growing too devoted to her for her comfort or his own. From seeing her two or three times a week at the houses of their friends, he now thought it desirable to seek her out at other times and places, and lately had made a practice of stopping for her in the late afternoons at the shop, and walking uptown with her.

IT was Ruth Vanderhorst who brought the matter to a head. She made an appointment over the phone and called

the same night, alone, at Mary's apartment. From the moment of hearing her voice, Mary knew the object of the visit, and even when the visitor appeared, was still at a loss as to what attitude she should take. She was fond of Ruth Vanderhorst—admired her intensely, and was grateful to her for all she had done for her. She would have made many sacrifices to preserve Ruth's friendship, but the censorship of one's friend was a delicate subject, even by a friend.

Mrs. Vanderhorst wasted no words. As Mary knew, she could be direct when she chose.

"I've always admired you, Mary," she began. "I think you're one of the pluckiest girls I know. I've wanted you to be my friend, and I've wanted to be yours. I'm going to put our friendship to a test. I hope you understand."

"You've come to speak about Bart Savage?"

"Yes. I'm glad your intelligence points so quickly to the object of my visit." She laughed. "Or perhaps it's your conscience—"

Mary smiled a little. "No. I'm sure it isn't that."

"I hope you're not going to make the way difficult, my dear."

"I don't want to. But I can't think I've done anything to reproach myself with."

THEIR glances met and held, Ruth's instrusive, Mary's calm and just a litte cold. Women have a faculty for estimating one another in this way.

Ruth Vanderhorst turned with a light laugh. "I hope, Mary, that you don't think—that *I* think—" She paused expressively.

"If I did," said Mary coolly, "I shouldn't be talking to you."

"Then we understand each other thus far. I wouldn't have bothered if I hadn't thought that you were what I think you are. It's a delicate matter, of course. But I've got to risk it. The talk about you and Bart has gotten to be unbearable to your friends. People are saying—unutterable things."

"Oh!"

"And other people are believing them."

"I can't see—" Mary began, but paused as Ruth broke in quickly:

"I know you can't. If you had understood from the beginning where this thing would lead, I think you might have been wise enough to have stopped it. You know, I did mention it. But it has been a sort of snowball, growing bigger all the time, until now—" She paused with a gasp. "Mary, you *must* know that Bart Savage is head over heels in love with you!"

"Love?" said Mary with a shrug. "I don't believe that."

"Well, call it what you like. The symbols are the same. The man is mad about you—has been for months. Everyone sees it—everyone knows it."

"What can I do?" said Mary uneasily.

"I'm coming to that. Perhaps your own good sense will tell you when you hear all I've got to say."

"This is very painful to me, Ruth."

"But it's more painful to others. I've got to speak plainly, Mary; I saw how this thing began. I was one of the few who knew you from your beginnings.

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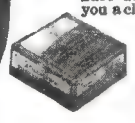

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"Thanks for that," said Mary with a bitter laugh.

"Who can speak plainly to you if I can't? If I wasn't fond of you, I'd let you go to the devil in your own way." She laughed and reached for a silver box on the table. "Here! I'm getting nervous," she gasped. "Give me a cigarette."

MARY watched her take a light, but said nothing. She would have liked to terminate the interview there, for the situation seemed to grow more difficult at every word, but she listened, aware of a growing distaste for the frankness of her visitor and of a morbid curiosity to hear the worst of her indictment.

"But I *am* fond of you. I can't have people lying about you the way they're doing. I've stood up for you—for you both, quarreled with my friends. But I tell you that you've tied my hands. There's nothing to say, no argument that I can use, when you and Bart are now seen constantly together, almost every day."

"I've told him to stay away," said Mary in a low, tense voice.

"It hasn't altered matters, then. *You* know the kind of a friendship you have for Bart; *he* knows it and *I* know it—but nobody else does. The thing that makes it worse is the fact that Bart Savage never looked at another woman before you came along. That's what makes the affair serious. The man is mad, I tell you—indifferent to what people say; and he's big enough to believe he can brazen the thing through as he likes. Men can do these things, but women can't. A single girl can't. You can't. You're cutting the ground that you've gained, away beneath your feet. I wont see you making this mistake without warning you while there's time. I wont see you losing caste if I can do anything to prevent it."

Mary had risen and paced the rug nervously.

"Please, Ruth! Please!" she said.

Mrs. Vanderhorst knocked off the ash of her cigarette, leaning toward Mary eagerly.

"No, I've got to finish. That's just your side of it. But there's another side—Lillian Savage's and her girls'."

As she shot this phrase, Mary turned, her face white.

"Mrs. Savage and—"

There was a blank look in her eyes, as though she had not heard correctly.

"You mean—" she paused again.

Ruth was merciless. "The girls—those darling children! You *must* think of them. Surely you must know the terrible unhappiness that you're causing now. Lillian Savage is ill. Women have been carrying these stories to her recently, putting the worst in them. She's very unhappy; I saw her yesterday."

"Did she say—"

"No, she's not that sort. She's too proud for that. She would die rather than confess her trouble. And she's so

delicate. If you could have seen her, you would have wept with pity."

Muttered words from Mary: "The children! I didn't think—" Her fingers wove nervously.

"After all, you see, Mary dear," said Ruth, dropping from the sentimental into a light, caustic note, "Bart is *their* man, not yours."

SHE had managed well. All artists have something of the actor in them, and Ruth Vanderhorst had played deftly upon Mary's pride, on her ambition, and then on her conscience. Mary moved slowly to the mantel, fingering the ornaments there aimlessly. Then she sank upon the divan, staring at vacancy.

"I—didn't think about the girls! I didn't know—about Mrs. Savage," she said slowly. "She hasn't been very nice to me. But—I—I'm not in love with Bart Savage. I don't think of him in that way. Perhaps that's why I never thought of them. I'm terribly sorry—terribly."

There could be no doubt that she meant it.

But Ruth Vanderhorst extinguished her cigarette in the ash-tray with a practical air.

"Well—what's to be done?" she asked.

Mary frowned. "It will have to stop," she said firmly.

"For *her* sake as much as yours, Mary."

"Yes, I understand. I wish I had sooner."

"Can you manage it?"

"I must."

"It will be difficult?"

"Very. But I'll do it." The frown on Mary's brows deepened but her lips were firm.

Ruth Vanderhorst rose, put an arm around Mary and kissed her. Mary yielded placidly.

"I hope you understand my motives, Mary? It hasn't been an easy thing to do. But somebody had to awaken you."

"I think you have awakened me."

"And I'm forgiven?" Ruth asked.

"Yes."

"Then good-by, dear. Things are never so bad as they seem. And now brace up—or I may have to do you as the Tragic Muse."

"Things might be tragic if they weren't so foolish," Mary said with a slow smile.

Ruth Vanderhorst kissed her again, and they parted.

The spectacular career of Mary Ryan reaches its most interesting phase in the forthcoming chapters. Be sure to read them in the next, the July, issue of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

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SQUIZZER'S LAME DUCK

(Continued from page 65)

the same, he was not forgetting the idea he had developed, and as soon as the class filed into the quarters of '13, celebrating its decennial, for a fraternal visit, Squizzer quietly stole away, hailed a taxicab and reached the station just as the train was pulling in, with a dense crowd awaiting it.

The one place, he decided, for which Archibald Pratt would make, would be the cab-stand, and so forthwith he cut across the platform and took station among the waiting hackmen. Many came and claimed vehicles, but no man meeting Dick's impression of Pratt appeared. Squizzer was turning away when a big, lank man, whose clothing was rough but neat, approached him with doubtful mien. He carried a battered grip in one hand, and a shock of tow hair flowed from under a wide-brimmed hat.

"Are you Squizzer—" The man paused and rubbed his forehead. "I forget the rest of the name, but—"

"Yes," Dick smiled. "I'm Squizzer Dick. How are you?" He held out his hand, still smiling. "I don't think I recall—oh, by George, yes, I do; you're Jim Obergoltz. Sure! Jim, this is certainly great. I—"

"I've been here two hours." Obergoltz's voice was big and hoarse. "I didn't want to butt into the class, though I'd come all the way from Minnesota for the reunion. Guess I was kind of scared—well, not scared, but you know, bashful. I was just thinking of taking the train and clearing out."

"Pshaw! It's good you didn't, old man. A good thing you didn't," Squizzer added emphatically. "The idea! Look here, Jim," he went on in the goodness of his heart, "I've got a cab here. Was looking to pick up some one. You jump in, and I'll take you to the headquarters."

"Well—" Obergoltz, obviously relieved and yet diffident, was holding back when Squizzer seized his bag. "Oh, come on, Jim. They'll be mighty glad to see you, old man. Doc' Sturges was telling of meeting you out West only the other day."

"That so?" The big man smiled, and was moving toward the cab when Squizzer, with an involuntary expression of chagrin, dropped the bag, then pushed it toward Obergoltz. "You take it, Jim, and climb into that cab there. I want to speak to some one."

IT was Squizzer's luck, he felt, that Archibald Pratt should appear just as he had hooked up with this backwoodsman. For undoubtedly the large, puffy person walking slowly up the platform with two bags, was the man he had come to the station to meet. Dick recognized him by his gait, and by an undefinable something, even though the beard and some hundred-odd pounds surplus weight were appendages acquired since college days.

"Archibald Pratt!" Squizzer, bustling up, laid hand upon the largest bag. "Let me take this."

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE'S SCHOOL SECTION

MISCELLANEOUS—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

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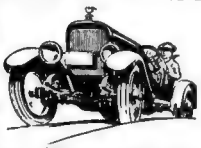

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"Eh! I—I don't think I—that is, I'm afraid you have the advantage of me. Your face is fam—"

"Why, I'm Dick, Squizzer Dick, of your class, you remember."

"Why—why—yes; I believe I do. Squizzer Dick, of course; I did know you slightly, didn't I. Well—well! How are you—er—er—Dick. How are you?"

Dick, repressing an inclination to butt the man in the stomach, forced a laugh.

"Yes, you knew me slightly. Knew me well enough to give me a licking the night you upset my bed, and I hadn't any better sense than to try to—"

"Oh, yes, yes, yes—of course," was the somewhat impatient interruption. "Yes, I remember. You haven't seen Stanley Allerdyce, have you? I left a message I was coming on this train—telephoned to his office."

Squizzer smiled.

"I saw Allerdyce up at headquarters. Don't know whether he got the message or not. I thought you might be on this train—I'm one of the Committee, you know—and so I came down with a cab for you."

Pratt's face lightened.

"Very nice of you, indeed—er—Dick; very thoughtful."

It was not until Squizzer reached his cab that he remembered it contained an occupant. He flushed and gestured toward Pratt as he opened the door.

"Pratt, I don't know whether you remember Obergoltz, Jim Obergoltz, of our class, who has come on from the Northwest."

Archibald Pratt blinked at the rough-hewn countenance of the man within the cab doorway and slowly shook his head.

"I'm afraid," he said stiffly, "I am not very good on names and faces." Barely touching Obergoltz's outstretched paw with the tips of his fingers, he climbed into the cab and sat with hands folded over his stomach, silent and unemotional as a statue of Buddha.

SQUIZZER glanced thoughtfully out the cab window. If he didn't get Pratt's attention now, he never would get it. The occasion was not at all propitious; things had broken badly at the very outset. Still, as a miler on the track-team, he had often made the best of a bad start. So now he faced the man bravely.

"Pratt," he said, "we've been reading about you in the East."

"Eh!" The man's head jerked upward. "Reading?"

"Oh, I mean about the Langborne estate. The liquidation—"

"Oh, yes, yes." Pratt's face showed signs of interest. "Yes, it has attracted a great deal of attention. Immense sum of money involved."

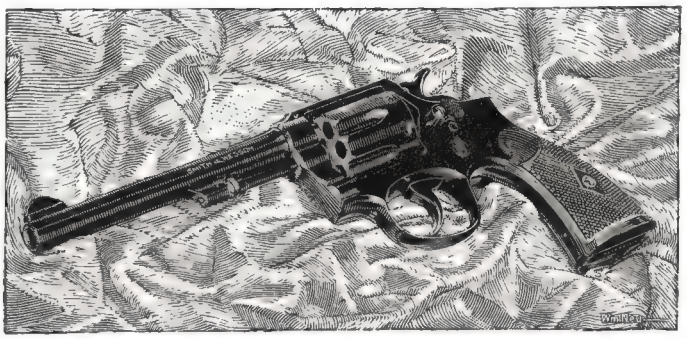
"So I've heard. Now, undoubtedly you are going to be pestered to death with security-peddlers, big and little—unless, of course you've invested the money."

The big man shook his head.

"Not yet," he said grimly.

"You're wise. You're the sort who wouldn't rush into things. I just want to say this: I am not only a friend and a classmate, but a Wall Street man, and if you should want any ad—"

Pratt's laughter was so sudden that both Squizzer and Obergoltz started.



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"So you're a Wall Street man! Stan Allerdyce said every Wall Street man in the class would probably be on my neck, and—"

"Allerdyce is a Wall Street man, Pratt."

"Oh, I know. He doesn't fool me. Not that he's tried! I don't mean that. But I've always found that those who do business with close friends usually find they have gained little more than experience—with an enemy to boot."

"Well, I don't know about that." Dick shook his head doubtfully. "Anyway, I want to say this to you, Pratt: the Buffer State has placed in my hands a five-million-dollar block of twenty-year road bonds, four per cent. You know there is nothing better in this country. I'm not worrying about selling them, of course; but when I heard you were coming, I just held them back to give you the refusal. I want you to think it over. Nobody can offer you bonds that are any better; most of them wont be half so attractive. And, again, here is a whole block covering a lot of the money you have to invest. You can realize, of course, the trouble you will be saved in shopping around—and the time."

A crafty expression wrinkled Pratt's pudgy eyelids.

"Is that the reason you came for me in a cab, Dick?"

"If that were the reason, would Jim Obergoltz be in here?"

Obergoltz swept the two with a self-conscious grin, while Pratt blinked and nodded.

"All right. Buffer State, twenty-year road bonds, four per cent; I'll remember, Dick. I can tell you it sounds better than anything Allerdyce has suggested. Much obliged, Dick. I'll think it over."

Squizzer tapped the man on the knee.

"Yes, you think it over, Pratt. I'm not trying to influence you. You're too big a man for that, just as you're big enough to know the full value of my proposition. I don't have to argue or talk selling stuff with you; it's simply open and shut."

Pratt hummed, probably a symptom of developing impatience.

"Let you know, Dick." He gestured. "Let you know. When I decide, I'll let you know. Don't want to be pestered. I'm here to play."

"Surely. I understand, Pratt."

THAT night after dinner the class marched to the campus and heard the seniors sing. When they had finished, '98 took its place under the walls of a venerable building where they, as seniors, had filled the June evenings with melody. They sang an old-time song, and then there were cries for Squizzer Dick and "Mother Machree." Squizzer had been sitting with his face upturned, watching the vague, fluttering branches of the inscrutable elms, with the stars higher above, his sensitive mouth twitching slightly as the breeze, laden with odors of turf, shrub and flower, softly touched his face. He had even forgotten Buffer State road bonds.

Now, without a word, he rose; and because his heart was involved, he sang "Mother Machree" as he had never sung it before. His voice broke on the last word of the last verse, and he sat down suddenly. The crowd was silent for a

moment. Cheers and handclappings came from the campus; his classmates, as though ashamed of their temporary emotion, took it up vigorously. Jerry Blauvelt was called upon for the song for which he was so famous in the golden nineties, beginning,

A short time ago, boys, an Irishman named Doherty—

Squizzer slipped out of his seat and went over on the campus, throwing himself upon his back on the turf, and gazing up through the vague elms, just as he used to do. A figure slouched down beside him. It was Jim Obergoltz. The class had not precisely taken Obergoltz unto itself, a fact due as much perhaps to Obergoltz's diffidence and lack of acquaintance as anything. At all events, he had clung with a sort of desperation to Dick, had followed him wherever he went. And Squizzer's sympathetic soul had made him absolutely welcome.

"Squizzer," he said in his hoarse voice, "I want to tell you the tears came when you sang that song tonight. I heard you sing it once when we were freshmen; it was 'long about the last of the term in one of the boarding-houses. Squizzer, that was what made me decide to go home and work for my mother and try to make her last days comfortable instead of getting a fool education."

"That so?" Squizzer Dick's voice betrayed languid interest.

"Yes. I couldn't leave here of my own will. Liked the place too much. Liked playing football, especially. So I did everything I could to get fired."

"You succeeded!" Squizzer chuckled.

"Yeh! I succeeded, all right. Well, I don't know as I've ever amounted to a whole lot, Squizzer. But I made my mother comfortable—and I did it just because I heard you sing 'Mother Machree.' And tonight when I heard it and thought of—of—my mother and—" The man's voice, which had been growing huskier, ceased.

Squizzer reached over and patted him upon the shoulder.

"I guess we understand, Jim," he said in a low voice.

LATER, when the two returned to the class tent, Rand, the class secretary, buttonholed Dick.

"Look here, Squizzer, there are a lot more men back than we expected tonight. Do you mind if we shove Obergoltz in with you down at the Seminary building?"

"No, I don't mind." Squizzer looked around at the groups seated at the tables. "Doesn't seem much excitement. Where are Allerdyce and Pratt?"

"I don't know. They went off in Stan's motor before dinner. Haven't turned up yet."

"I see." Dick turned to Obergoltz. "Want to turn in, Jim? You're booked with me. I'm tired."

"All right." The big man followed Squizzer out of the tent.

Neither spoke a word until after they were in bed. Then Obergoltz cleared his throat.

"Squizzer, kinda looks as though Allerdyce had put one over on you, doesn't it—running off with Pratt that way?"

Squizzer, who was beginning to wonder

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what Nancy was doing, how she was getting on—in short, just a bit discouraged and homesick and blue, grunted inarticulately.

"I suppose," went on Obergoltz, "that any bonds are as good as another; that is, they're all printed paper. Don't know much about Wall Street and all that stuff. Know a lot of people in my country get stung every year."

Squizzer roused up in defense of his calling.

"It makes a lot of difference what's printed on that paper. There's the difference, for instance, between the Buffer State and, say, Picayune Smelting Company, which has never paid a dividend and never will. There's the difference between honest and wise financiers and corporations, and those who are fools or dishonest, or both."

"Yeh—"

"Good night, Jim."

CLASS reunions at Commencement are characterized by at least one striking phenomenon, whether the anniversary be the tenth, twenty-fifth or fiftieth. Magically, and yet with the semblance of utter naturalness, the acquired habits of long years in the world and attainments of various sorts slough away, so that in their relations with one another and in their common regard, these men who spent four years of their youth in close companionship revert in greater or less degree to their original status—become boys once more.

By the second day, which was the last day of the week, a day crowded with multifarious events, including a baseball-game between the varsity nine and representatives of a time-honored rival, the class of '98 had gone through the processes of translation. Those who had been snobs and outgrown it, returned to snobbishness; those who had been bullies, began once more to swagger. Athletic heroes knew again the old adoration, and those who had been mischievous took to pranks long since abandoned.

"Hey, there, Squizzer—go into the house like a good little fellow and get my cane in the hall. It's a crooked ivory handle."

The tone and manner, as though coming from a grave of forgotten things, caused Squizzer Dick to start. He had been making his way toward Jim Obergoltz, who, remote and alone, sat brooding. But now he turned, and saw Archibald Pratt seated at ease, in his puffy eyes the old bullying, half-contemptuous leer. Squizzer flushed.

"Why, you great big—"

He checked himself. Here was a man whom he hoped to land for a big block of bonds.

"Hurry up, there, Squizzer, if you don't want those specs of yours put on inside out."

Without another word Squizzer went to do as he was bid. No one who witnessed the incident seemed astonished. Indeed, most of the class were engrossed at the moment in baiting Ike Baldridge, vice president of a great railroad, who, having come in his special car and not having the nerve to bring it to the college depot, had left it at a station down the line.

Squizzer found the cane. He picked it

up, swished it venomously and then took it out to Pratt, who received it with nothing more gracious than a grunt.

Thereafter the intervals were not many when Pratt left Squizzer in peace. By the time the class was ready to join the picturesque alumni procession to the baseball field, however, Dick was fairly well fed up and began to think about the credit side of the ledger.

"Pratt," he said, as they fell into line behind the band, "what have you decided about those bonds?"

"Nothing yet, little fellow, nothing yet; mustn't crowd business upon pleasure. Remind me tomorrow night. I've had a lot on my mind since I arrived here."

THIS statement reminded Squizzer that Pratt had indeed in the past few hours seemed to have a lot on his mind. There had been furtive whisperings among him, Allerdyce and several others; there had been drawings-apart, buttonholing of various individuals—a secret pother that had caused no little speculation. It was not until the class had come to rest outside the baseball field to let younger classes pass by into the inclosure that Squizzer was enlightened by Allerdyce, who—casting a glance at Obergoltz, standing at Squizzer's side in a suit of flannels that did not fit him, still wearing the black frontiersman's hat—drew Dick aside.

"Squizzer," he said, "there's a reception on right after the game. You remember Lord Grousemere—"

Squizzer frowned perplexedly for a moment. Then he remembered. Back in senior year had come to the college a visiting delegation of Oxonians. One of them, a young peer of jovial parts and keen intelligence, had instantly won his way into the hearts of the class. He had stayed on at the college after the delegation had gone to a sister seat of learning, had been elected to membership in every organization in which membership was considered an honor, and had left memories of his joyous and highly colored visit that had passed not only into class but into college tradition.

Now he was a statesman of international renown, high in the councils of his government. Squizzer had read of his arrival in this country and of subsequent developments in Washington. But curiously, he had not associated the man with the visitor of twenty-five years before. For that matter, Squizzer, not being a society man, had seen little enough of the distinguished guest at the time.

At all events Allerdyce, Pratt and others of the old society group had prevailed upon the eminent foreigner to pay another visit to the college. He had arrived but an hour or two before, en route from Washington to New York, and was now sequestered at the estate of a member of the class of '97 on the outskirts of the college community.

"We're going out to see him after the game, and have dinner on the lawn—speeches and that sort of stuff," concluded Allerdyce. "It'll be a formal, high-life affair. The thing is a secret; so keep it to yourself. Pratt and I pulled this off, and we're doing the inviting. Mum's the word. Transportation's arranged for. You're assigned to Doc' Sturges' car. Mum, now."

"All right. Sure. Thanks!"

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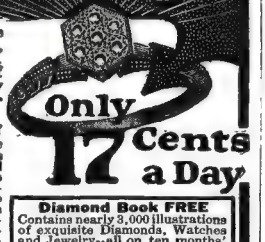

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Later, after the visiting nine had succeeded as usual in putting a temporary damper upon the occasion by winning the ball-game, the members of the class of '98 began to disappear from their headquarters by squads and sections.

Squizzer, who was among the last to leave, climbed into Sturges' car, filling the complement of passengers. As the chauffeur pressed the starter, Dick was struck by a sudden thought.

"Doc'," he said to the owner, "I just recall seeing Jim Obergoltz back there in the tent. He'll be left behind, wont he?"

Sturges shrugged.

"Squizzer, this whole thing was got up by Allerdyce and Pratt. It's their show. They did the inviting. Maybe they asked Obergoltz and he wouldn't go. I don't know. Anyway, it's their funeral, not ours. Baldy Pratt told me especially that they were handling the thing, as well as paying for it, and to keep mum."

"So Allerdyce told me." Squizzer's face was puzzled. Suddenly he stared at Sturges. "Doc', do you believe for a minute they were ashamed to—to—" The little man's voice trailed away.

"I don't know, Squizzer. Of course he's a backwoodsman, all right—talks and acts and, by George, looks like one." Sturges laughed. "Anyway it's none of—"

"Hey! Wait a moment!" Squizzer touched the chauffeur on the shoulder. "Let me out of this."

Before Sturges or any of the other men in the car could put out a restraining hand, Squizzer had leaped to the ground.

"It's all right, Doc'," he said in a strained voice. "You know Jim Obergoltz ought not to be left cold. I don't care anything about this party. You go ahead."

"But Squizzer—"

DICK, almost on a run, turned the corner and disappeared. When he reached the tent, it was deserted—save for a figure in a far corner, hunched over a beer mug. Obergoltz looked up.

"Hello, Squizzer. Looks as if everybody's cleared out. Where they gone? Anything doing?"

"Oh, I don't know." Squizzer sank onto the bench and for some time sat staring at the table. At length he looked up.

"Jim, let's stroll. Let's look into every tent and see what's doing."

"All right. Oh, say, Squizzer, I nearly forgot. A telegraph-boy was here looking for you with a telegram, just a minute ago. I signed for it, and put it on the stand in the house."

"Oh—thanks." Squizzer hesitated a moment. "All right, you walk around in front. I'll get the message and join you."

Squizzer dashed into the dwelling, picked up the yellow envelope and tore it open. It was from Tom Piper in Chicago, answering a wire Squizzer had sent as to his purpose in coming to the reunion.

"Don't bother about Pratt," it read. "He placed his money yesterday through Allerdyce and Company."

Squizzer had never in his life sustained a shock quite so poignant as this. It may be credited to him that he took it standing, without a change of expression.

"Come on, Jim," he said. "I'm ready."

"Nothing serious, was there, Squizzer?"

"Oh,"—Squizzer laughed grimly,—"not quite life and death, Jim."

They dropped into '01's quarters and were very hospitably received. They remained an hour, finally making their way to the tent of 1913, where eventually Jim Obergoltz was prevailed upon to get on the platform and recite that once famous old hobo epic whose burden is "Walk, you son of a gun, walk!"

EVENING was well along when the two men went back to the '98 tent. Squizzer was occupied with his thoughts, and his eyes burned with an unnatural light.

Pratt and Allerdyce were standing on the sidewalk, engaged in animated conversation with several members of the class. Judging by appearances, the two men were having the law laid down in unequivocal terms. Pratt was the first to see Dick. His face darkened.

"Look here; I want to see you."

Squizzer darted to his side.

"I want to see you too, Pratt. Would you mind stepping into the house?"

Archibald Pratt hesitated; then, seeing Obergoltz doubtfully regarding the two, he turned and followed Dick up the steps. The parlor of the old house was vacant. Squizzer entered and stood waiting until Pratt came in. Then he shut the door.

"You said you wanted to see me, Pratt." The little man's voice was tense.

"You had to blat about leaving that jayhawker out of the reception, didn't you? Set the class to raising the devil with Allerdyce and me."

"I—I—" Squizzer's voice caught. "I never said a word to a soul, not even to Obergoltz. It was too—too—disgraceful, humiliating for a man with any sensibilities to—" Dick raised his hand suddenly and brought it with full force into his palm. "Pratt, in all my experience, not even when we were boys, have I ever known of anything quite so despicable. Jim Obergoltz is a tie of blood, one of our own. The—the fact that he hasn't made good—is that any reason why men who are supposed to be gentlemen, who—who— What I am trying to say is that if we ourselves amount to anything, if we believe in ourselves, what we are, what we have done, then we can throw our mantle over the shoulders of whomsoever we please and give him our sanction, proud to stand—"

The interruption was a burst of laughter.

"Going too fast, Squizzer—tripping over your palate. As for your friend Updegros, or whatever his name is, I advise you not to act like a fool just because you know how."

"Yes?" Squizzer studied the man. "I thought the fineness of the point wouldn't penetrate. I pass that. I want to tell you I learned today you had already invested that money through Allerdyce and that—"

Squizzer waited patiently until the loud burst of laughter had subsided.

"That's all right, too. You had a perfect right to do what you pleased with

the money. I can even see the humorous side of your making an ass of me in the past twenty-four hours. You lied about the investment in order that you might have the fun of seeing me dance while—while you played the fiddle. I danced, all right. A great joke—rare!"

Again Squizzer waited for Pratt's mirth to subside.

"There is only one thing I can't get over," he went on. "That is that I was so abject in my efforts to please and placate you that I even boasted to you that you had once licked me. As though that were an honor! Well, it was no honor. You were a big, overgrown bully, and you forced me into a corner so I would have to fight. And—and"— Squizzer gulped—"you whipped me. All—all right." With a swift movement, Squizzer whipped off his coat. "Baldy Pratt, the man that is able to walk out of this room will be the man who has won the return engagement!"

Archibald Pratt, who had been following the rising crescendo of Dick's fury with ever-increasing astonishment, stood with hands down, staring as Squizzer confronted him with brandishing fists.

"Defend yourself!"

Still the fat hulk of a man made no move; whereupon Squizzer, with an exclamation, reached out his hand suddenly and seizing Pratt's nose, pulled it vigorously. Then, ponderously, Pratt attempted to smite his waspish opponent. Squizzer ducked under the slowly moving arm; and Pratt, unbalanced, staggered toward the corner, where he stood coughing, both hands on his chest.

"My—my heart! You murderer! You know I've been advised a—a—against exercise."

Squizzer waited a moment, poised. Then suddenly he walked to the door and opened it.

"Anything that is said about this, Pratt, will come from you. Now get out. Get out, I tell you."

Pratt took his hands from the region of his heart, felt his nose, and then straightening, walked past Squizzer and into the hall with as much dignity as a man can command who is not convinced that attack from the rear is unpremeditated.

Squizzer went out of the house to the street, suffering from tremendous reaction. Not in years had he uncorked the vials of emotion as in the past five minutes; indeed, his memory contained no record of a similar experience.

JIM OBERGOLTZ still stood where Squizzer had left him. Upon his face was a peculiar smile.

"What were you doing to Pratt, Squizzer? He looked like a whipped dog as he came out."

"I—I pulled his nose."

"Yeh! Some of the class told me what you were sore at. They apologized for leaving me out." Obergoltz shrugged. "I told 'em never mind. Those things don't bother me."

"Jim, I want to be honest with you. I was sore at Pratt about you, but I was more sore because he lied to me about those bonds. He had already invested with Stan Allerdyce, and had been making a monkey of me. That's why I pulled

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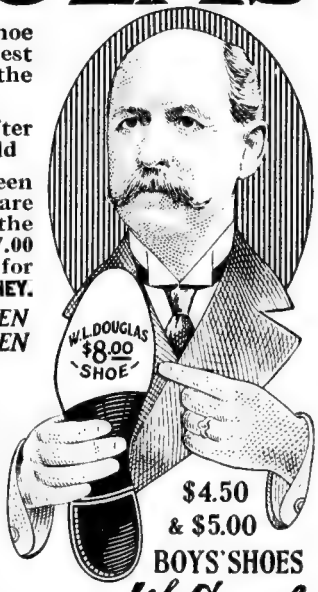

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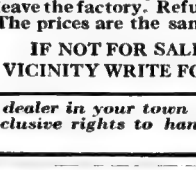

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his— Pshaw, Jim. I told Baldy I wouldn't mention it if he didn't."

Jim smiled. "Oh, well; it's only to me. You and I are bunkies, you know."

Squizzer frowned. "Jim, I want to go home. I've been thinking about my wife all evening. There's a thunderstorm coming up. Probably the house will be struck by lightning—or something will happen. Maybe something *has* happened. I tried to get Nancy on the telephone this afternoon, just before the parade, and Central couldn't raise the house. You don't think—"

"Love your wife, do you, Squizzer?"

"Love her!" Squizzer's lips twitched. "I love mine too. No place like home, Squizzer."

"You have a wife, Jim!"

"Sure I've got a wife. She was a lyceum reader, and got snowbound out in my country. I dug her out of the snow. And—and—well, finally we got married."

"Is that so!"

"You bet it's so. Maybe there's one other woman in the world like her—one, that's all. I'm guessing that from the picture of yours you got stuck on the bureau in the Seminary there."

"Jim!" Squizzer turned upon the man. "Do you want to go right now and see her—a little cottage all covered with roses and vines, food that will make you sick when you think what we've been getting here—"

"Squizzer, you're hitting me in an awful weak spot, awful weak. How far are you from here?"

"Oh, about fifty-five miles. We'll look up a time-table and—"

"Look up nothing. We'll hire an automobile, and—"

"Look here, Jim, I'm not a millionaire."

"When I said we, I meant me."

"But you—"

"Squizzer, listen. Now, don't get mad—I haven't said anything only because I was bashful. But honest, I've made so much money up in the Northwest, in lumber, in the past twenty-five years, that—well, I never had time to count it. I don't like to talk this way but I want to say it all at once. I got banks up in the Northwestern country so full of my money that they're bustin'. I own four of 'em myself. All of which brings me up to my point: I've always been suspicious of Wall Street and so-called financiers. What I made, I wanted to see, watch it grow; get me? Course, the presidents of my banks invest bank funds, but not my money, see? No sir. Oh, I've got a few blocks of securities. But small—"

"You mean to say—"

"I mean to say what I'm saying, Squizzer. The only point is that the wife has been worried. She has been pestering me to come down to New York and really put the stuff to work. What you were telling Pratt in the cab reminded me." The man paused. "Squizzer, I like you. I know when men are gristed in the right mill. You're square and game and straight. You're what I came to find, an honest Wall Street guy. So, on that ride we're going to take to your place, with its roses and that wife of yours, why, we'll talk over ways and means, beginning, of course, with those Buffer State road bonds and—"

"Jim!" Squizzer's voice was pitched in high key. "You go down to the garage and get that car. I—I just want to try once more and see if I can get Nancy on the phone."

JERRY AND JAMES AND JOHN

(Continued from page 45)

also proud. He now had a lead-pipe cinch—or so he thought.

He arrived in Montreal some two hours after Jerry had left New York, and registered at the Hotel Royal. By inquiries, aided by judicious largesse, he discovered that Ailsa and her father were expected at the Royal about one o'clock on the following afternoon. This was a serious set-back, apparently destroying at once the advantage gained by his early arrival. But John was not daunted. His favorite policy was one of masterly inactivity until the arrival of the ideal moment for action—and he at once proceeded to put it into effect. He went to his room and spent practically all of the afternoon and evening there, playing patience and thinking. The thinking was bad for him, for John had been cursed since birth with a viciously logical mind.

Even when quite immature, his favorite selection from "Robinson Crusoe" had been the passage where *Robinson* draws up a list of the advantages and disadvantages of his shipwrecked plight, and he had never been able to see the humor of Stevenson's parody of that list in "The Wrong Box." Now that the triangular tournament fought out by Jerry and James and himself with Ailsa for prize drew to its predestined close,—for John could not conceive of defeat, so poorly did he rate the strategic abilities of his opponents,—he began to examine his victory a little more carefully. Just what was this loving-cup he was about to receive, after all? He loved Ailsa—of course he did; but a thought came to him that he could not brush away: would he ever have been quite so eager in pursuit of her without the added incentive of dishing Jerry and James?

She was fascinating — agreed. But John was a deep one. And a wife who was fascinating, day in, day out, might prove very exhausting. This silly test she had forced upon the three of them—a test easy enough, of course, for any one with intelligence, thought John, with some gratification—but was it a Good Sign in the Woman Who Would Be His Wife?

John had plenty of time to consider all this sort of thing in the twenty-odd hours he spent in his room with no company except that of the waiter who brought whisky-and-soda, dinner, whisky-and-soda, breakfast, whisky-and-soda, and two stiff whiskies-and-sodas, as the time crept on toward noon. And under the minifying lens of his logic, Ailsa shrank astonishingly. Her virtues tarnished like dulled silver; her defects shone bright as

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scrubbed brass. By the time John was ready to descend to await her arrival, he felt very uncertain as to whether he would permit her to marry him at all, but quite agreed upon a magnanimous but firm whip-hand on his part, in case he should.

THE clock said a quarter to one. John took up his post in front of the main revolving door of the hotel, with some perturbation. He felt very unsteady in his mind. One more whisky-and-soda would brace him completely, he knew, if it could be managed. The concise gilt sign that said with such refinement, *"Bar,"* above a guiding arrow, was too tempting. He looked at the clock again and followed the arrow.

The moment he entered the bar, he was conscious of an atmosphere of hilarity. But he nearly fell over when he perceived that what furnished the atmosphere was a combination of Jerry and James.

They were not drunk in the least, but they were merry. Tall glasses stood beside them, and anon they clinked the glasses, and as they clinked, they sang,

"Poor old Ailsa, dry your eyes!
This is the old raspberry!
Johnny's certainly won the prize,
But are we annoyed? *Not very!*"

The words were James', the music Jerry's, the discord mutual. Then they saw John.

"Hist!" said Jerry sepulchrally. "The lucky man!"

John disclaimed the compliment with a wave of his hand and opened his mouth to speak, but James forestalled him.

"Johnny!" he said with apparent feeling. "Old man, I can't tell you how sincerely I congratulate you on your good fortune. I can't tell you—"

But just then a bellboy came chanting through the door.

"Mr. Fitzimmons!" the bellboy chanted. "Mr. Wynkoop! Mr. Catherbridge! Mr. Winsted!"

Jerry and James and John looked stupefiedly at each other.

"Mr. Winsted! Mr. Catherbridge! Mr. Wynkoop!" repeated the bellboy, and turned to go

"Here, boy!" said Jerry, recovering poise. "This gentleman!" He pointed to John.

"These gentlemen, you mean," said John, very firmly, indicating Jerry and James. The bellboy grinned.

"Same for all three gentlemen. Long distance—New York calling, please," he vouchsafed.

"Where's telephone?"

"In the lobby, sir, at your right, sir. The desk-clerk will inform you. 'Kyou!" And he was gone.

"Ailsa!" said Jerry, the merriment dying out of him. James put his hand on Jerry's arm.

"Here, buck up!" he said. "It's for Johnny, of course; he's her fiancé. And then I suppose she just wants to give us poor devils a last sisterly word."

"I am not engaged to Ailsa," said John in a voice of ice. "I thought you were—one of you. I thought that was why you were celebrating."

"Anyhow," said Jerry, practically, "it

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can't be Ailsa, you know—she's in Montreal."

"Have you seen her?"

"Not yet, but—"

"She's probably changed her mind. Just like her," said John, so scornfully that both the others stared at him. A light seemed to break on them, suddenly. They clung to each other, gasping.

"Why, he isn't any keener than we are."

"Doesn't sound so, does he?"

"Listen, Johnny, *are* you?"

"I refuse to discuss a lady's name in a barroom," said John, scoring. "And I think it high time that one of you answered that call."

"It was James; the boy paged him first."

"Why, you crook! It was—"

They matched for it. John lost.

THEY were at the telephone. "Which one of you is it?" said the thin voice over the wire. Then it laughed.

"Jerry," said John basely.

The voice laughed again.

"It isn't! It's James. Dear Jimmy—"

"So it is," said John. "Forgive me for trying to fool you, dear!" he added quite tenderly, and Jerry had to hold James to avoid a scuffle.

"Jim," the voice proceeded, "dear Jim—and Jerry—and John." It halted, sentimentally. "I can hardly tell you—"

The tone told everything. The three exhaled a unanimous gasp of relief. Then. "Tell us what?" they moaned into the telephone in chorus.

"I'm married. I'm so happy."

"Married?" And in spite of everything, they felt a little let down. It was almost with a genuine despair that they questioned: "Ailsa! Who to?"

"Elmer," said Ailsa.

"Who?"

Impatiently: "Elmer! The chauffeur."

"Go-od Lord!"

"We're so happy!" sighed Ailsa. "Daddy's wild, of course."

Then she began to speak rapidly.

"Only, I do beg your pardons—all of you—for putting up that job. Only I did so want to get you all out of the way so I could make up my mind—and honest Injun, I never thought or imagined—only then Elmer just made my mind up for me and so—it wasn't exactly with malice aforethought, was it? Only I do so hope you forgive me!"

"We forgive you," said John, the spokesman. "We despair, but forgive you. We congratulate you—and Elmer. We hope you'll be happy."

The voice sighed, soulfully. "I knew you'd be sweet," it said. "Do come and see us—we're at home after the first—Elmer's garage. It's a new one—only five blocks away from Daddy's. Good-by, dear boys!" Something clicked. She had rung off.

John turned from the telephone.

"Well, I'll—" he began. "Well, I'll—"

He seemed to find the sentence incomplete and yet be unable to finish it.

"Elmer!" said James. "That dumbbell!"

"He told me a Whiffle was better than a Lucrezia," said Jerry reminiscently. The name aroused him. He looked at his watch. He smiled. He straightened his tie.

"So long!" he said, hurriedly. "Sorry—but got to meet somebody—rush." He was gone.

"So long!" said James, and turned back in the direction of the bar.

John said nothing. He was too busy tearing into finer and finer strips a copy of yesterday's first sporting edition of the New York Evening *Trumpet*.

WITHIN THESE WALLS—

(Continued from page 55)

that Harry Chalender had died, he felt lonely, and tears ran down into his tremulous mouth.

The departure of Chalender took a prop from RoBards. He had outlived the rival who had saved his life and embittered it, and had confessed that RoBards had done him greater injury.

RoBards himself was ready now to go, and merely waited. The only thing he wished was to see Immy. She wrote that she would come to live with him as soon as she could close up her husband's mixed affairs and learn whether she was rich or poor.

As an earnest of her coming, she sent along a daughter, to go to an Eastern finishing school. She had been named Patty, and the girl had grown to such likeness that when she stood at last before RoBards, he almost fell to his knees to welcome the revenant ghost of Patty to his arms.

She stood mischievous, exquisite, ambrosially winsome, ready to laugh or cry, threaten or take flight, according to whichever strategem she could best use to gain her whim.

She ran into her grandfather's bosom and set his old heart to clamoring like a firebell in the night.

So there was a new Patty in the world! The world would never lack for Patty Jessamines.

Nor for David RoBardses, either, it seemed; for everybody said that Keith's son Ward was just like his grandfather. But only in looks, for Ward was already an engineer in his father's office and even more zealous to build inland seas upon other people's lands for the sake of the infinite New York he loved.

Ward fought his grandfather, called him an old fogy, a poor Canute who wanted to check the world's greatest city, and in his very ardor he resembled RoBards more than either realized. He resembled him, too, in his response to the fascination of this new Patty. They were cousins, and in RoBards' youth that had implied a love-affair. But nowadays such alliances were looked upon as perilous and scandalous. So Ward gave Patty merely the glance of admiration one casts upon a jeweler's window and resumed his efforts to convert his grandfather to the justice of making Westchester a mere cistern for New York.

The young man knew nothing of the meaning of the land to RoBards; he knew nothing of the secrets the house retained like a strong vault. He had the imperial eye of youth, a hawk's look to far horizons. He found old David querulous, and old David found him sacrilegious; so they fought a civil war as uncivilly over the enslaving of the Westchester waters as North and South over the enslaving of the black nations raped from Africa.

Keith began to incline to his father's side, for he shared with him the love of the natal soil. Then Ward turned on Keith with equal impatience, denouncing him as a "back number." This brought about another alliance between Keith and his father, and they solemnly pledged themselves to save Tulip-tree from New York.

Chapter Forty-six

WHEN the new lake of Kensico was linked to the Williamsbridge reservoir, Keith and Ward visited the farm. They spoke of tremendous future projects; for the problem of fetching New York water was one that promised no respite.

They went back to the City, leaving RoBards there to install a new "superintendent," the fifth since Albeson had trudged into his grave after his fat old wife.

Then the autumnal gales began to squander the golden leaves of Westchester, spendthrift heirs stripping the estate and bringing back poverty. And one night a wind came down in a tidal wave of air, a wind made up of an army of winds.

RoBards stood on his porch to watch the battle of his trees, each engaged with some fierce invisible wrestler that tore off every rag of leaf and twisted every limb, but could not win a fall. He laughed with pride to see his tulip trees defending his graves. They neither yielded nor fled; and they did not die.

The air resounded like a pounded drum with the blasts of wind. The yard was a caldron of boiling leaves and a smoke of dust. Mrs. Laight, the new farmer's wife, begged the old gentleman to come inside the house, but he motioned her away, and she watched him through a window, saw him chuckle and wave his hands to his brave trees.

He trusted even to the old giant whose roots he had sawed off when they pushed into the cellar walls. But he had trusted too long.

A vast breaker of air rode over the Tarn of Mystery and splashed its pool with a dozen toppled veterans, oaks, sycamores and cedars; then the whole weight of its rush rolled down the hill upon the house, and plucking off shingles like leaves, wrenching shutters loose and scattering a chimney into flying bricks, it fell upon the ancient tulip tree on its outer side and brought it down like a fallen lighthouse.

It smashed the roof it had shaded so many years, and sliced off the graceful old cornices.

Mrs. Laight screamed with terror, then with horror; for she saw RoBards go to his knees under a deluge of splintered timbers. Then the bole of the tulip tree rolled down upon him as the temple column on Samson; and he was lost to the sight of her affrighted eyes.

WHILE the young farmer and the two hired men labored in the rain that came in a deluge upon the gale's heels, Mrs. Laight saddled and bridled a horse and forced it through the storm and across the barriers of blown-down trees into Kensico Village for Doctor Brockholst.

By the time he arrived, the mangled body of RoBards was stretched upon the couch in the library. The master's bedroom had been cracked open by the fallen tulip tree, and the rain was thundering through it.

The Doctor, seeing the state of his patient and all his red wounds, and hearing the groans he could not stifle, first checked the outlets of his blood, then made ready to give him ease of pain.

Old RoBards was as eager for the anesthetic as a starved infant for its mother's milk, but he suddenly bethought him of his need of all his wits, and he gasped:

"If—if you make me sleep, I may—may nev—never wake up, eh?"

Doctor Brockholst tried to evade a direct answer, but RoBards cried:

"I wont risk it—risk it. I've sent—I've sent Laight to tele—telegraph my son to come up from—from town. There's things I must say to him—before—before—"

He was more afraid of unconsciousness than of pain, and he would not gamble with a palliation of his anguishes. He chattered to the Doctor:

"Just stay here and let me talk. It helps to keep me from making an old fool of myself. And don't let me die till Keith comes. Don't let me die till—oh, oh! Oh, God! Oh, God!"

He gnawed his lips and twisted his face in all the fierce grimaces of a desperate athlete trying to pry himself from a hammerlock.

He groaningly computed the hours it would take Keith to reach the farm if he got the message and came at once and caught a train. . . . . But those hours passed, and Keith was not yet visible to Mrs. Laight, watching from the porch in her wind-whipped skirts and her fluttering shawl.

The old man moaned, watching the inexorably deliberate clock:

"The storm has torn down the telegraph-poles, I suppose, or wrecked a bridge or two. But somehow, somebody will get the word to my boy, and he'll fight his way here. I know Keith!"

The Doctor pleaded with him to accept the aid of a sedative and even made a show of force, but the old man grew so frantic with resistance, that he gave over.

And after a time when Mrs. Laight had given up watching for Keith, there came upon his agonized mien a look almost of comfort. He smiled and murmured:

"Now I know a little of what Patty suffered. I thought I knew before; but nobody can imagine pain—or remember it. It's a hideous thing—to hurt. But I ought to be able to stand it for a night when that little girl bore far worse—far worse for years."

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he babbled her name, and if at intervals he sobbed and the tears slid down his much-channeled features, it was for memory of the bitterness of her woe, and his belated understanding of it.

He would not take any quieting drugs or let the needle be set against his skin, but he called for stimulants to lash his crippled heart to its task, putting the Doctor on his honor not to cheat him.

The physician fell asleep at midnight and woke shuddering in the chill of dawn, ashamed to think that every moment of his hours of oblivion had been a torment to his panting client.

SOON after the dawn came Keith, whipping a horse through the roads soggy with the nightlong rain. He ran across the ruined porch into the wreck of the house, and his father answered his searching call with a note of triumph.

"That's my boy! I knew he'd come! I knew!"

Doctor Brockholst, who had never seen Keith, somehow expected a youth to dash into the room. He was surprised to find that the lad was a grizzled giant of fifty. But Colonel RoBards ran to the couch-side and dropped to his knees, with a childish: "Daddy!"

The shock of the contact brought a shriek from the old man's jolted bones, but he wrung a laugh from it. Then he whispered in a pell-mell of hurry:

"I had to see you, Keithie, to get one more promise from you before I go. The city, that infernal New York, will be demanding our farm for the bottom of one of its lakes before long. But don't let 'em have it! Fight 'em to the last ditch! And whatever you do, don't let 'em open the cellar walls.

"There may be nothing there to see by now, but you remember — about Jud Lasher. He's there still, and after all these years, I can't bear the thought of anybody finding out what we kept inviolate so long, especially after I'm gone and can't fight back.

"Promise me you wont let 'em tear down the house and the walls. I've seen 'em clear away so many old homes and stone fences and roads—for other lakes—I can't abide the thought of them prying into our walls.

"And I want to lie by your mother's side out there in the yard. You'll put me there. And once I'm there, they'll never dare disturb me! You can put up a sign like Shakespeare's: 'Dear friend, for Jesu's sake, forbear—' or something like that. Promise."

"I promise!" said Keith.

And his father, failing away beneath his eyes like *Hamlet's* father's spirit, spoke already from underground.

"Swear!"

"I swear!"

"Swear!"

"I swear it, Father!"

There was a faint moan, almost of luxury, the luxury of one who sinks out of all pain and all anxiety into that perfect sleep which Socrates declares to be the richest pleasure even of the Persian kings.

Keith thought he saw his father smile, thought he read upon his lips the playful pet name he had seen and heard there when as a child he saw his father praising his mother tenderly:

"Patty? Pattikins, pretty, pretty Pattikins?"

Then the lips ceased to beat together, and parted in the final yawn that ends the boredom of this life.

Chapter Forty-seven

THERE was something incomplete and irreparable for Immy in the fact that she reached New York too late to see her father before he joined her mother.

The new New York was beyond her comprehension. She was aghast at the aged look of all her old friends, whom she remembered as young friends. She and her mirror had kept such steady company that she could not see the slow changes in her own features. She saw them all at once in the looking-glass of her old companions.

They made her unhappy, and she went up to Tulip-tree Farm to live, saying that it was more salubrious for her children. Keith's wife died, and his children grew away from him, and he felt tired, old, of an evening mood. So he also settled down at Tulip-tree Farm, taking care that the restoration after the storm should renew the old lines of the house without disturbing its cellar walls.

He had taken a large part in the engineering of the large six-mile siphon that ran four hundred and twenty feet under the oozy bed of the Harlem. He watched the water from the new Croton aqueduct roll into Lake Manahatta of Central Park, and felt that the Croton field was now drained.

All eyes turned farther north, but the remaining cis-Hudsonian streams belonged to the State of Connecticut, whose sovereign rights were not at the mercy of Albany. The Catskill Mountains were the nearest source in the trans-Hudsonian territory, and the Ramapo Company bought up all its rights. A tempest of scandal broke out, and Governor Roosevelt and Mayors Low and McClellan quashed the company and set on foot the project of the Ashokan reservoir, rivaling the magnitude of the canal cut through the Isthmus of Panama.

A strip of land two hundred feet wide and ninety-two miles long must be secured by condemnation and purchases, from Esopus Creek to New York, across thousands of farms, and a siphon must be driven a thousand feet under the Hudson River between Storm King and Breakneck.

The work involved the submersion or removal of nine villages and thirty-two cemeteries of nearly three thousand graves, some of them more than two centuries old—sixty-four miles of highways and eleven miles of railroad.

And Tulip-tree Farm with its graves, was only one of this multitude. Keith and Immy fought the city in vain. Nothing they could do could halt the invading army of fifteen hundred workmen that established itself at Valhalla and began to dam the Bronx above White Plains.

The dam was of cyclopean concrete, eighteen hundred feet across, and it was made to hold thirty-eight billion gallons of water, which was only a fifty-day supply for New York.

The new lake with its forty miles of

Mighty Like a Rose

Every baby is mighty like a rose in looks and sweetness to its mother. But the fact that 200,000 babies die every year in the United States before reaching their first birthday proves that thousands of mothers fail to realize how like a rose a baby is in its frail hold on life.

The most dangerous business in the world—

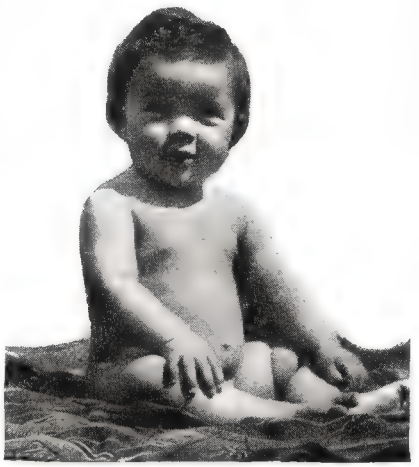
the most hazardous occupation, is the business of being a baby. Figures show that the reckless taxi driver has a better chance to live a year than has the new born baby to survive one day.

Of the Seven Ages of Man—

the first age, the "baby in its nurse's arms", is the most dangerous. 35,000 die on the day on which they are born. 100,000 of them die before they are one month old.

The hideous picture of the Ammonite god Moloch into whose fiery arms and bosom ignorant, superstitious mothers of old threw thousands upon thousands of babies as a sacrifice, fills the mind with sickening horror.

Yet today, through ignorance and neglect, the horrible sacrifice of babies is still going on, while parents and communities blame the deaths on Providence and hot weather.



Sweetest little fellow
Everybody knows,
Don't know what to call him
But he's mighty like a rose.

Frank Stanton

"If all the babies born in New York City in one year were placed shoulder to shoulder they would make a line twenty-two miles long," according to U. S. Senator Copeland, former Health Commissioner of New York City, and

"Five miles of babies—

"died in the first year of life in 1891. In that year the great fight to save babies was started. Welfare stations were established where mothers could go for advice and where their babies were given thorough physical examinations. Pasteurized milk was the next baby life-saving step. The result of teaching mothers how to care for their babies and of providing pure milk has reduced the death rate in New York City from 241 to 72 per thousand.

"But we may still refer to the deaths of infants as the Slaughter of the Innocents—for the work done in New York City but proves that thousands upon thousands of baby deaths can be prevented throughout the United States when every mother is taught that:

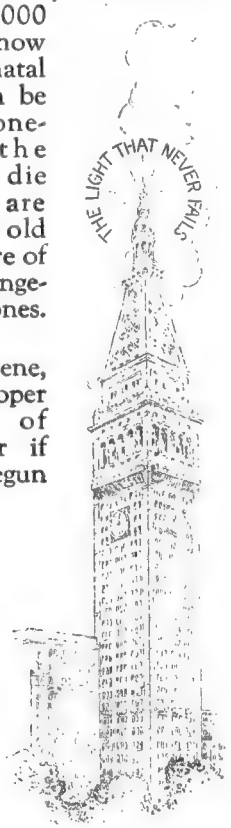
"Babies do not die because the weather is hot—

"Babies do not die because it is dry or because it rains. Babies die in the summertime because they are not properly fed and not properly taken care of."

Save the new born babies—

by teaching the mother to safeguard her own health before the coming of the baby. Thousands of the 35,000 babies who now die on their natal day will then be saved, and one-half of the 100,000 who die before they are one month old will be saved when mothers take care of themselves and make proper arrangements for the coming of their little ones.

Observance of the rules of hygiene, proper feeding, proper bathing, proper clothing, will save thousands of runabout baby lives this summer if the work of saving them is only begun in time.



The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company issues a booklet which has helped to save many, many baby lives. It may save *your* baby's life this summer. The booklet is called "The Child." It tells of the care of the baby—its feeding—the care of milk and what to do the minute a baby shows digestive disturbances—the cause of most baby deaths in summer.

The care of the runabout child is also fully covered. The bogy of the Second Summer is banished and the belief that teething is a sickness is proved to be merely an old-fashioned superstition.

The booklet tells the Mother how to care for the baby's food—to remember the three C's—Clean, Cool, Covered.

The booklet was prepared for use of Metropolitan Policyholders but whether or not you are a policyholder if there is a baby in your family and you want to know how best to see it through this summer, write the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, New York City, and ask for a copy of "The Child." It will be mailed free of charge and without obligation on your part.

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shore-line would obliterate no villages and few burial places. But one of these few was the RoBards' plot, and Keith trembled to think that when the house came down and the cellar walls were removed piecemeal, the bones of Jud Lasher would be disclosed.

He dared not speak even to Immy of the secret in the walls. He could only stand aside and watch the felling of the great tree-steeples.

He and Immy watched the wrecking-crew demolishing the house, throwing the chimneys down, tearing off the roof and opening the attic to the sun. Then the ceiling went, and the floors of the bedrooms where their bare feet had toddled.

At last the house was gone, all but the main floor, and from that stairways went up to nowhere.

After the wrecking crew had left off work for the day, Keith and Immy wandered one evening through the place where the house once was, and poked about the débris in the library floor. They noted the hearthstone of white marble.

They had seen to the removal of the graves before the tulip trees came down. The family had been transported to the increasing city of the dead at Kensico, but they were still debating what monument to rear.

Now that she and Keith stared at the white marble hearthstone, they were both inspired by a single thought.

"Let's use that for a headstone in the family lot in Kensico!" Immy said, and Keith agreed.

They were proud of the felicity of their inspiration, and, hiring laborers, stole the slab that very night and carried it over to the graveyard, and saw to its establishing.

And they never knew the final irony of its presence there above the parallel bodies of David and Patty RoBards. It linked Harry Chalender's destiny forever with theirs. But they never made a protest. It was the Parthian shot of Fate, the perfection of the contemptible contemptuousness with which life regards its victims.

Unwitting of this dismal joke upon his father, and remembering only the secret he was trustee of, Keith loitered about to see the cellar walls demolished; but from somewhere the edict came that the walls should not be taken away, and the workmen abandoned them.

And now the house was gone as if it had been burned in some night of fire. But it had served its time.

It was time for the old house to vanish. Like a human heart it had held within its walls sorrow and honor, passion and crime. It was time for it to cease to beat, cease to be.

Keith was almost sorry that the cellar walls were left. He had braced himself against the shock of revelation, and when it did not come, he suffered a collapse of strength. But he could not share this disappointment with anyone. It must remain forever a RoBards secret to die with him.

When at last the dam was piled across the valley, and the little brooks encountered it, they backed up and filled their own beds to overflowing. They swelled till they covered the levels where the bridges had been. They erased the roads that dipped into them now and ran under water. The brooks united into a pond, and the pond widened and lengthened. It began to climb the hills and wind about the promontories.

One evening Keith and Immy went out to bid the home a last good-by. They rode along the highway in a motorcar and left it with its driver while they clambered down to sit upon the hillside and pay the final rites of observation.

Over their heads the automobiles went by in a stream, flashing back the sunset that turned the sheet of waters into blood.

As the sunset grew wan and colorless, the motor-lamps came out like stars, and the searchlights fenced as with swords. It grew chill, but the old brother and sister sat fascinated by the disappearance of all their ancestry under the climbing waters.

They were old, and yet they felt themselves children, for they stared across the misty years between to the clear heights of their youth. Their hands unbidden moved to each other and clasped fingers. . . . .

AT length by imperceptible deepenings the cellar walls were all engulfed. The lake was an unbroken mirror to the placid sky.

The house and farm of Tulip-tree had been, and were no more.

Keith helped Immy to her feet, and they scuffled toward the road out of the night up into the night.

In the sky to the south the lights of far-off New York were pallidly suspected. The waters below were black in their depths, save where the stars slept or twinkled as a ripple shook their reflection, or a fish, exploring its new sky, broke through into another world.

THE END.

Thus ends Mr. Hughes' darkly splendid epic of Tulip-tree House and of the tragic secrets its walls kept so well. Enters now, in the September issue of The Red Book Magazine, the scintillant comedy of Betty Bowen and her mad glad bad career—the novel which Rupert Hughes has for years been planning, and upon which for some months now he has been actively at work.

The heroine of this, the supreme achievement of one of America's foremost novelists, is by all odds the most fascinating figure in modern fiction—a creation only the genius of Mr. Hughes could have accomplished. The wit, the beauty and the unscrupulous power of Thackeray's immortal *Becky Sharp*, the grace and charm of Mr. Hughes' own fondly remembered *Persis Cabot* of "What Will People Say?" and a certain vital quality of daring

all her own—these make Betty Bowen what she is, a woman destined to become one of the two or three most real and interesting people in your circle of fiction acquaintance.

And what a career Betty had! At seven she saw her mother's house pulled down by a fanatic Puritan mob; at seventy she spent of her great wealth to buy the heirloom treasures of a European emperor. And her life between those significant episodes was—not tranquil. She turned the heads of half the statesmen in Europe and America; she earned the friendship of the powers behind the throne and on it, and won enmities no less distinguished and powerful. On one occasion she found it expedient to pay a Vice-President of the United States a huge sum to lend her his name in a matrimony hardly holy; and on another—but space and discretion forbid any enumeration here of the amazing exploits in the tumultuous career of this extraordinary woman.

You who have read any or all of the ten novels in The Red Book Magazine which have won for Rupert Hughes distinction as a master of English prose, an exceptionally keen observer of American life and an unafraid portrayer of vivid characters and dramatic situations—you will perhaps realize what it means when we say that this new story even surpasses the conspicuously excellent works he has already published. True, this coming novel is wholly different from its predecessors, for like all conscientious artists, Mr. Hughes never follows the beaten track—scorns to abide in trails blazed either by himself or anyone else. But the new story nevertheless has all the fine qualities of imagination, style, authenticity and courage which have made his other novels so well liked. And we confidently predict that when you have read the first installment, in our forthcoming September issue, you will share our enthusiasm.

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WRITE FOR BOOKLET AND TESTIMONIALS

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THE BLUE IMAGE

(Continued from page 40)

tion. The whole interest of the country lies in solving the mystery; once solved, it is forgotten.

"But even our best experts could not give out an explanation in this case; we wished to do so because we wished to keep the thing quietly in our hands until we could work it out. But we could not put out a solution; there wasn't any!"

HE paused in the narrative, and selected a cigarette from an open box on the table but did not at once light it.

"When it became certain," he went on, "that no assassin could be connected with this incomprehensible tragedy, we turned back upon the details of the only witness who was able to furnish us any fact whatsoever. But with every day's delay, and with each complication of the matter, the old woman's story had become more involved. It was so decked out with fanciful imaginings that it became difficult to realize that the whole extravaganza was pure fancy, outside of two evidences.

"These two evidences stood alone as the only concrete features in the case; one, that she had heard a sound, which could have been the explosion of a weapon; that she took it for the back-fire of a motorcar at some distance away indicated that it was a loud explosive sound.

"This fact seemed to be unquestioned.

"Bradmoor had been killed by a shot, and the sound of the shot had been heard. Of this we were certain; but that something had leaped off into the water was an evidence more in doubt. We were convinced that the woman had heard the sound of the shot that killed the old Duke, but we were by no means convinced that she had heard a splash in the water. That element of her story seemed always too closely associated with her theory—that the whole tragedy was at the hand and instigation of the Devil. Around that idea she presently built up her fantastic explanation.

"With every interrogation of her, she became more elaborate, more profuse in her details, and more extravagant in her assurance. She had heard the Devil leap into the sea. It was not a heavy splash—such as the body of a man would make; it could not have been the body of a man. It was a thin, slight, sharp splash, precisely what the slender body of a Devil's imp would make as it leaped lightly from the edge of the window into the water—its pointed feet descending, its arm up."

Henry Marquis laughed!

"She had every detail of it now. It must have given her an immense interest in life. Imagine that startling melodrama cutting into the monotony of uneventful days in a padded chair by a window. And from being a neglected and forgotten derelict, she was presently the heroine of a vivid romance, a person of importance to the countryside. The cottage was crowded, and she had the glory of a story-teller of Bagdad.

"The result was, of course, that she presently became useless so far as any further inquiry was concerned. That was clear. She was of value to us for two facts only—and one of them in doubt. That she had heard the shot was certain. We felt we could depend on that; but the splash was likely fancy. And the more we considered that element of the case, the more we were convinced that this was one of the colored details requisite to her theory.

"There was no ledge to the window. There was no way in which an assassin could have climbed there in order to leap off into the sea after the crime had been committed. There was no place beyond that window from which the shot could have been fired. There was only the open sea lying beyond it.

"Of course, there were improbabilities suggested—one of them was that the shot had been fired from the high mast of a sailing ship; but there had been no sailing ship on that afternoon. The officials of the Coast Service were able to assure us of that; they kept a record of everything. No sailing ship had been on the open sea on that afternoon inside of this point.

"Of course, we considered everything.

"Some crank sent us an anonymous letter, saying that the shot had been fired from an airplane, or a seaplane; and we looked into that. But there had been no such craft in the neighborhood on that afternoon. So those possibilities were excluded. They were so unlikely that it seemed almost absurd to inquire into them. But when you stop to think about it, they were the only theories that in any way indicated a rational solution of the matter; and that they were not the solution, there was, as it happened, conclusive evidence. There had been no sailing ship, and no aircraft, near the place on that afternoon."

MARQUIS paused again. He lighted his cigarette at one of the candles on the table, drew the smoke through it an instant, and then came back to his narrative.

"I have been giving you this case in extended detail," he said, "because I am trying to make you realize the difficulties that it presented, and how carefully those difficulties were considered. I wish you to understand, as we presently came to understand, how incapable the thing was of any solution. We returned again and again to it, as I have returned here in my narrative again and again to it, because we were constantly assailed with the belief that we had overlooked something. There must be some evidences that had escaped us—a way into that room, or a way out of it, by which an assassin could have encompassed Bradmoor's death. But we got no further. There was no way into that room, nor any way out of it, and there was no way from above it in which an assassin could have killed Bradmoor; and yet there he was, shot to death in his chair!"

Henry Marquis laughed. It was an ironical chuckle of a laugh.

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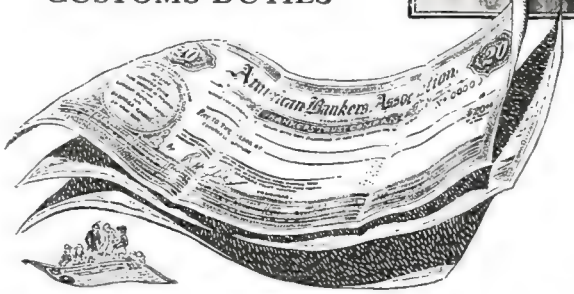

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"The butler's mother was the only person with a theory, and by Heaven, there were evidences to support it. She assembled them and fitted them together. She convinced the countryside. The very impossible things we found connected with the irrational explanations of the matter, were the strongest evidences of her theory.

"One had to consider them, no matter how practical one was.

"The very fact that we were able to show that old Bradmoor could not have been killed by any human agency of which we had any knowledge, proved, as she pointed out, that he could have been killed by a supernatural agency only. Certainly only a Devil's imp could leave no marks on a wall, and could leap off, disappearing into the sea. Besides, Bradmoor had been afraid of the Devil!"

Henry Marquis hesitated a moment. He broke the cigarette in his fingers into fragments, crumbling them on the table.

"Now, there," he said, "one came upon a series of evidences that had to be admitted. Bradmoor had been noticed to act queerly for some time. It was only after his death that the various trivial instances were precisely recalled, and fitted together. But they had been beyond doubt observed, and, now when they were connected up, they took on an unquestioned significance.

"The man had been afraid of something!

"He would lock himself into his room at night; he never sat long in one position: he would not stand before a window, nor sit with his back to an open door. It was recalled that he had been clever with an explanation of these idiosyncrasies—extremely clever. It was a draft he avoided before an open door. Or his eyes were sensitive to the strong light of a window; or he was nervous—too many pipes—he must find a milder tobacco, and so forth.

"The explanations covered the peculiarities while the man was living, and there was nothing to create a suspicion of some unusual motive; but after his death they became signboards that all pointed in one direction—the morale of the man had been gradually breaking down under an increasing monomania of fear!

"These evidences were all bright-colored threads for the Devil theory. Bradmoor had been afraid of the Devil! And he had not been afraid without a reason! The butler's mother had a fine, lurid theory that pleased the countryside."

HENRY MARQUIS suddenly smote the table with his hand.

"But it could not be considered by us. There is only one thing of which I am absolutely certain, and that is that the supernatural does not exist. This is a physical world. Every problem in it has an explanation. The Devil is a myth.

"There was one thing only to do now," he pursued, "and that was to go back over the man's life to see if it contained any adventure that might be in any way connected with the tragedy. We began to investigate his life."

The face of Sir Godfrey Simon beyond him at the table lifted unmoving, like a mask:

"There is where you made a mistake," he said; "it was not enough to go back over Bradmoor's life; you had to go farther than that."

"Farther than Bradmoor's life?" Marquis interrogated. "How could we go farther than that? What was farther than his life?"

A faint smile appeared on Sir Godfrey Simon's face, but he made no reply.

Henry Marquis was annoyed.

"You mean the curse that killed Bradmoor!"

"Precisely that," replied Sir Godfrey, his face unmoving.

"If you had come to me, I could have predicted what would happen to Bradmoor. He could not escape it."

Marquis interrupted.

"Then you knew it was going to kill Bradmoor?"

"Surely," he said. "Had it not killed his father and his grandfather?"

"But his grandfather was drowned on the Northwest Coast," continued Marquis. "He was shooting brant, and the plug came out of the boat."

"Some one pulled the plug out," replied Sir Godfrey.

"And his father fell from the steeple of the chapel here."

AGAIN that vague smile, like a bit of sun on a painted image's face.

"Did he fall?"

Henry Marquis swore under his breath. "Damn it, man," he said, "you are a companion for the butler's mother, only the old woman is more satisfactory; she gives an explanation with her theory, and you never give an explanation. If you know what killed old Bradmoor, why don't you tell us how it killed him?"

Sir Godfrey Simon looked calmly across the table at the Chief of the Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yard. The mask of his face had now the expression of a man of experience regarding the futile chatter of a child.

"Marquis," he said, "you sometimes profoundly annoy me. Because one understands one feature of a matter, does it also follow that one must understand equally every other feature of it? I have made this explanation until I am monotonously weary of it: I know what killed the old Duke; I do not know how it killed him. You do not see the interest in this case as I see it. The interest to me lies exclusively in the fact that it did kill him. I am not concerned about the means it took. I don't care. I am not interested. That is for you to find out, if you care."

He took up the glass of whisky beside him, tasted it, and put it down. He acted to me like an amused man, at a quarrel of children.

"If you find out how the old Duke was killed, you will see that I am right—if you ever find out."

Marquis shrugged his shoulders. He turned again to me and said:

"We finally reached the dead point. There was no solution to the thing!"

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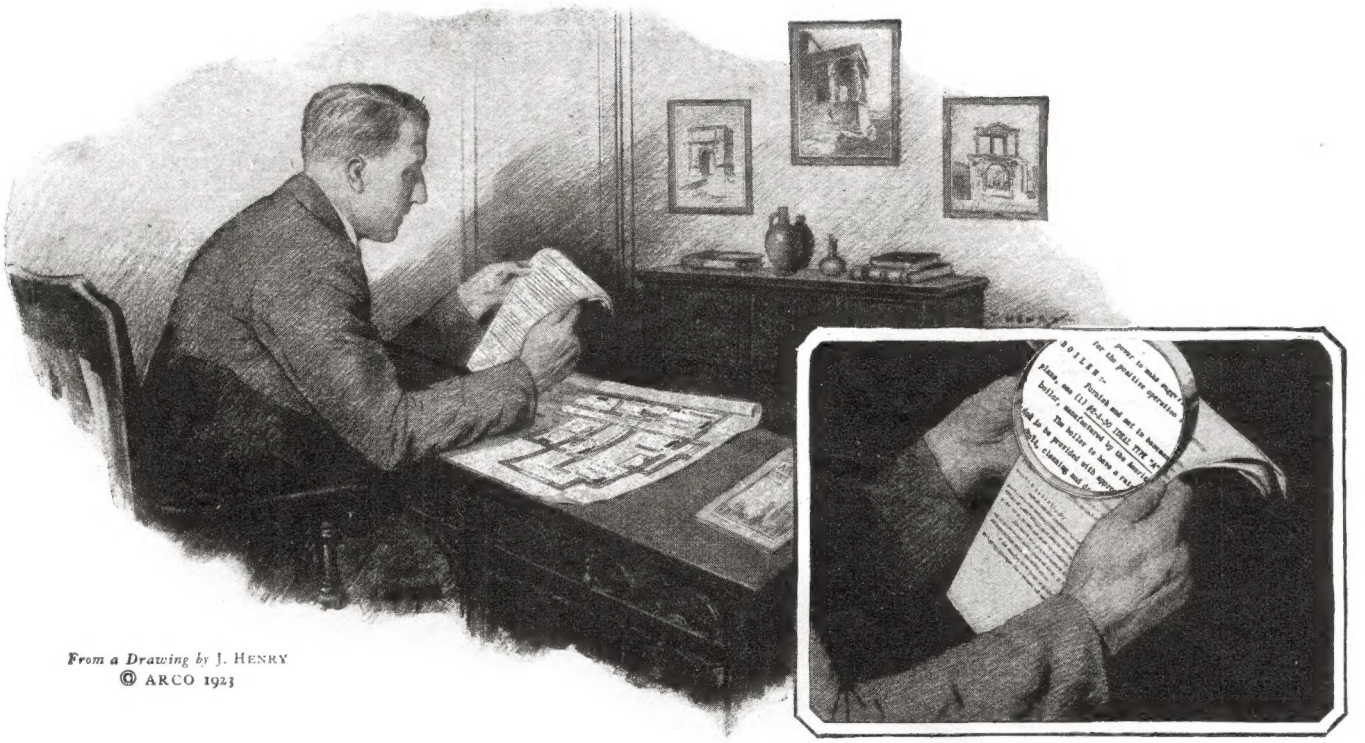

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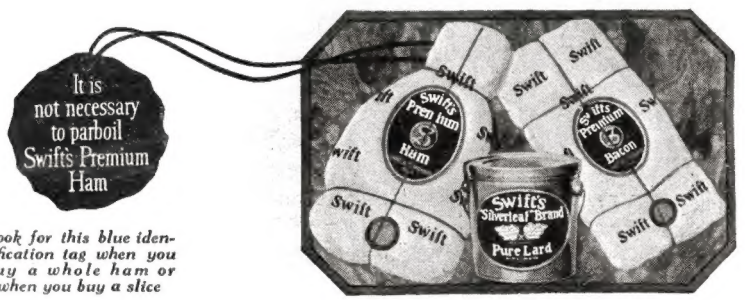
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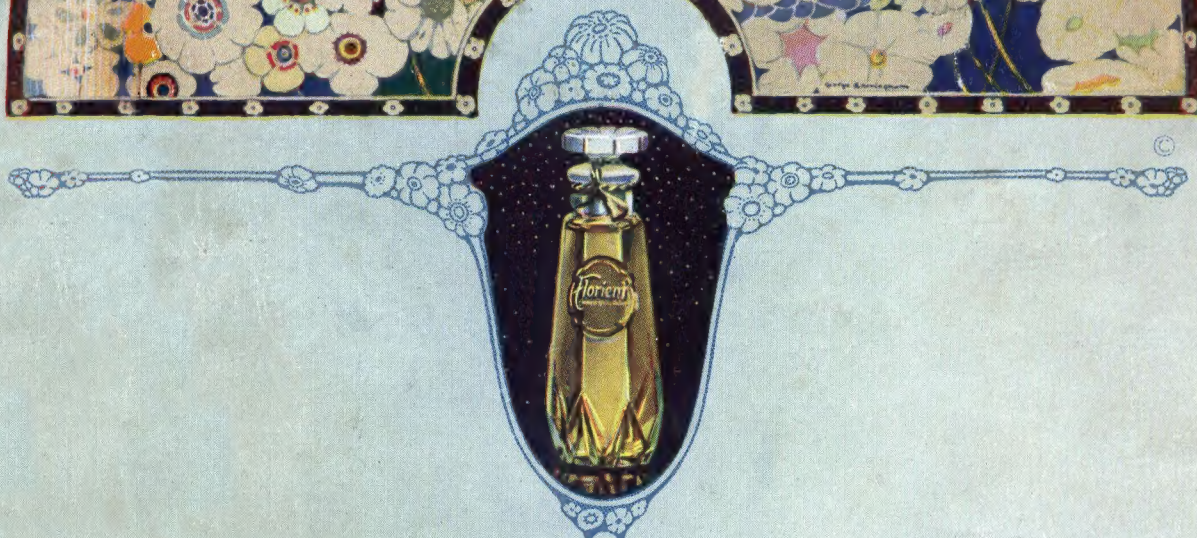

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